HEAVY METAL®

The Adult Illustrated Fantasy Magazine

August 1980
$2.00

IND 36587

0 70989 36587 0 08

CONTENTS

Heavy Metal August 1980 Volume IV, No. 5

Muzick, by **Lou Stathis,** 4

Comix by **Jay Kinney,** 4

SF, by **Steve Brown,** 5

Comix Int'l by **Maurice Horn,** 5

Flix, by **Bhob,** 5

The Moebius Interview by **Diana K. Bletter,** 6

Shore Leave, by **Moebius,** 7

Professor Thintwhistle, by **Steve Stiles** and **Richard Lupoff,** 27

The Bus, by **Paul Kirchner,** 34

Little Tiny Comics, by **Rick Veitch,** 36

Rock Opera, by **Rod Kierkegaard, Jr.,** 39

Salammbo, by **Druillet,** 45

Mysteries of Eroticism #2, by **Moebius,** 64

Changes, by **Matt Howarth,** 65

Norhearth Fair, by **Larry Elmore,** 70

Progress, by **Bilal,** 73

The Alchemist Supreme, by **Ribera** and **Godard,** 89

...Forty-one..., 3

Chain Mail, 33

Front cover, Fun Turns Into Love, by **Jim Cherry**

Back cover, Not so Heavy Metal, by **Michel Gueranger**

"Shore Leave," by Moebius, "Salammbo," by Druillet, and "Mysteries of Eroticism #2," by Moebius are all from *Metal Hurlant* ©1980. *Metal Hurlant* is published by L. F. Editions, Les Humanoides Associes, Paris. All rights reserved.

"The Alchemist Supreme," by Ribera and Godard, and "Progress," by Bilal are reprinted from *Pilote* Magazine ©1979, 1980 Dargaud Editeur, France. Reprinted by permission.

All other copyrights are held by individual artists, authors, and/or representatives.

Illustration by Jim Burns

...FORTY-ONE...

The balance of each issue of a magazine like *HM* can vary remarkably; sometimes we find ourselves with what seems like dozens of short stories, and on other occasions—of which this is one—all the material is long, and there may be only a half-dozen or so stories in the issue. But what stories! Moebius—who is, if the letters we get mean anything, *the* star of this star-studded magazine—is back with the eighteen-page conclusion of his "Shore Leave." (And, for lagniappe, we've thrown in another of his "Mysteries of Eroticism"—the first was in last month's issue....) And Druillet, who built up a large following in this country through his regular appearances in *HM*'s first two years, is back with the beginning of a major new work, "Salammbo," for which last issue's brief "Message from the Shadows" was only a shadow tease. Drawing upon Flaubert's original *Salammbo* for his theme, Druillet has resurrected Lone Sloane and made fresh use of the airbrush in his most memorable work ever. (Next issue we'll publish Brad Balfour's in-depth interview with Druillet.)

Bilal's "Progress!" gathers momentum this issue as the sides are drawn between the Old One in the chateau and the developers who propose to build a vast complex on the site, while "The Alchemist Supreme" reaches its penultimate installment and Axle comes within sight of the realization of his quest. (Next month's conclusion of "The Alchemist Supreme" may leave you wishing for more of Axle and his tomboyish sidekick, Musky...but that's no cause for alarm because we have the sequel, "What is Reality, Papa?", lined up to begin in our November issue.)

Last issue I said that our September issue would be a special Rock issue, drawn in large part from the two annual Rock issues of our French affiliate, *Metal Hurlant*. Well, due to one thing and another (including some problems they're having in France), we've pushed that issue back one month. Look for our October issue to be a special Rock issue.

Finally, an apology to Berni Wrightson for misidentifying his recent book in our June issue as *The Berni Wrightson Treasury*, and our apologies to all of you who went out on a fruitless search for a book of that title and wrote us letters about it. The correct title of this lovely omnibus volume of Berni's work is *Berni Wrightson—A Look Back*, and it was published by the Land of Enchantment with a list price of $60.00. Mea culpa...!

—Ted White

HM COMMUNICATIONS, INC., is a subsidiary of National Lampoon, Inc.

Chairman **Matty Simmons** President **Julian L. Weber**
Chairman of the Executive Committee **Leonard Mogel**
Executive Vice-President **Gerald L. Taylor**
Sr. Vice-President **George S. Agoglia, Sr.**
Vice-President, Finance **Peter Philipps**
Vice-President, Subscriptions and Product Sales **Howard Jurofsky**
Controller **Edward Fox**

HEAVY METAL MAGAZINE (USPS 379-970): "Heavy Metal" is a trademark of HM Communications, Inc. ©1980 HM Communications, Inc., 635 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10022. All rights reserved. Nothing may be reprinted in whole or in part without written permission from the publisher. Any similarity to real people and places in fiction and semi-fiction is purely coincidental.

EDITORIAL INFORMATION: Publisher assumes no responsibility for unsolicited material.

Editor: **Ted White**
Executive Editor: **Julie Simmons**
Copy Editor: **Susan Zimmer**
Art Director: **John Workman**
Art Assistants: **Bill Workman, Dan Steffan, Janice Pignata**
Production Director: **Camille Russo**
Production Assistants: **Laurie Drummond, Raymond Battaglino**
Circulation Director: **George S. Agoglia, Sr.**
European Editor: **Diana K. Bletter**
Foreign Rights Manager: **Christina Miner**
Publisher: **Leonard Mogel**

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Published monthly by HM Communications, Inc., 635 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10022 $19.00 paid annual subscription, $32.00 paid two year subscription and $39.00 paid three year subscription in territorial US. Additional $3.00 for Canada and $5.00 elsewhere. Second class postage paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Subscriber please send change of address to Circulation Manager, Heavy Metal Magazine, 635 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10022. Allow six weeks for change. POSTMASTER: Please mail form 3579 notices to Circulation Manager, Heavy Metal Magazine, 635 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10022.

ADVERTISING OFFICES: *New York:* **Howard Jacoby,** Advertising Manager, Heavy Metal Magazine, 635 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10022 (212) 688-4070. *Chicago:* **William H. Sanke,** Midwest Advertising Director, 360 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago Ill. 60601 (312) 346-7145. *West Coast:* **Sage & Hoyt, Inc.,** 1900 Ave. of the Stars, Suite 924, Los Angeles, Ca. 90067 (213) 277-7125. *Southern Offices:* **Brown & Company,** Northside Tower, Suite 407, 6065 Roswell Road, NE, Atlanta, Ga. 30328 (404) 252-9820.

MUZICK

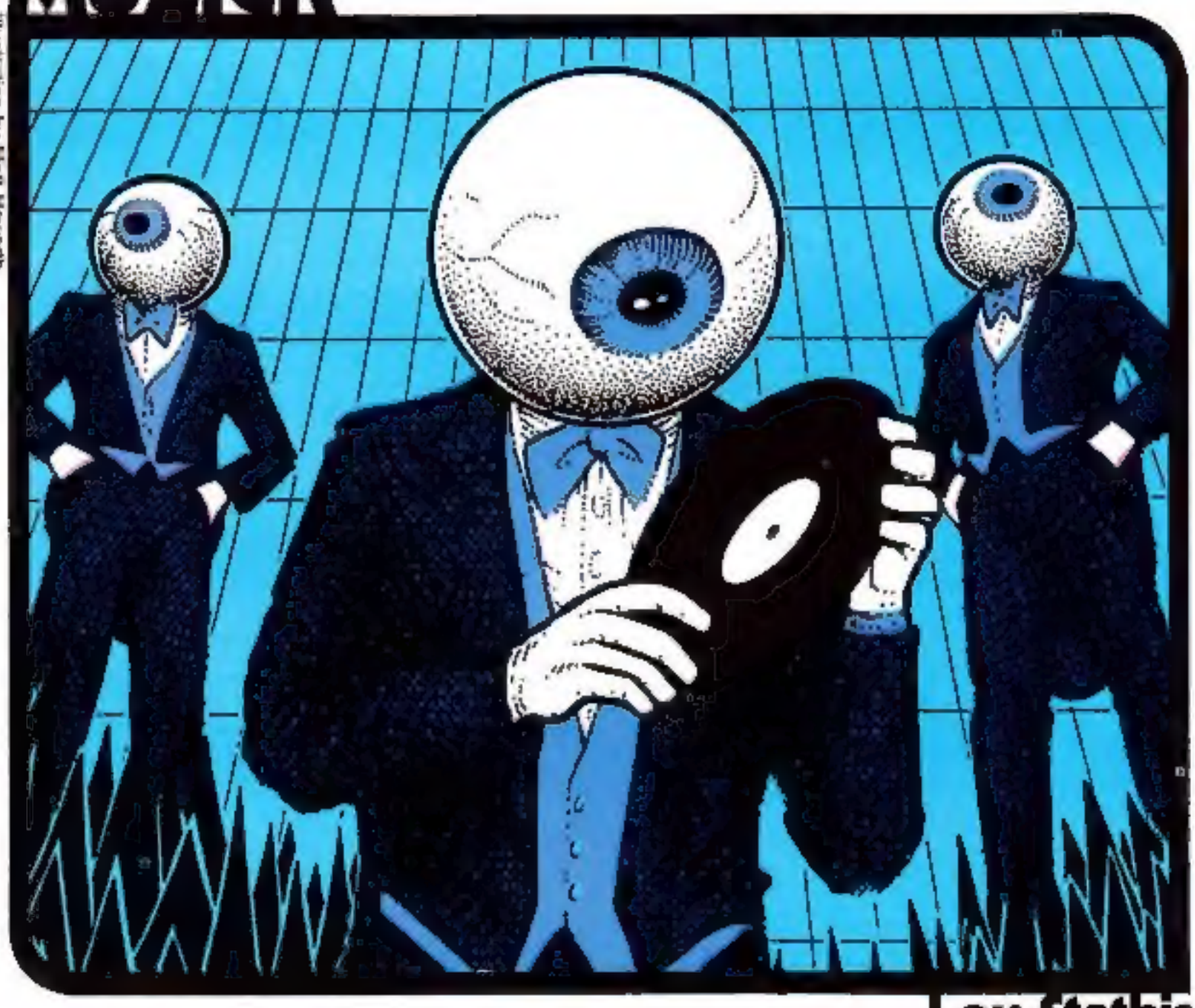


Illustration by Matt Howarth

Lou Stathis

Certain things are best accomplished obliquely. Take the distinctly intimidating task I've manfully shouldered this month—scrutinizing the Residents. To those ignorant of this bunch: be aware that they are the most uncompromising aggregation of muzick makers you are likely to come across. Ever. Simply put, the Residents not only exemplify the so-called underground, they are it. Period. Their recorded work (only some of which is still available) includes seven LPs, two EPs, five singles, one twelve-inch disco single (!), as well as a few partial contributions and/or assists to a handful more—all on their own label, Ralph Records. The muzick on these recordings is a challenge to the listener and a Hitchcockian nightmare to the writer faced with using mere words to describe it. There is much more to the Residents than meets the ear. Let me explain....

Some of you might recall an item of classic sixties vidiocy called "My Favorite Martian," a show that saw Bill Bixby, in an early tubular incarnation, harbor a Martian in his spare bedroom. It happened during the course of one episode that Uncle Martin (as the roving Red Planeteer was cleverly dubbed) found himself within earshot of some "pop" muzick emanating from a radio (some of you might also recall the dreadful oatmeal that passed for rok on sixties TV). Thoroughly nauseated, Martin decides to gift his witless host with a taste of unadulterated Martian hepcat sounds. Predictably, when Martin gets down and shakes his Martian moneymaker, the result is a barrage of unpleasant noise —"alien muzick" that was as lame in its execution as the rok was.

Allow me to elaborate on this scenario in pursuit of a point. Suppose, if you will, that Uncle Martin gets himself a dose of *real* rok instead of that Hollywood wimpshit Bixby ingests without discrimination. As a man of obviously refined tastes, don't you think Uncle Martin would immediately ditch his cultural chauvinism and shake his butt to the Big Beat? I think so. And from there—a mere short leap of faith—wouldn't Martin's next step be getting a band together the instant his spacegoing Volkswagen got him home? No doubt about it at all. So, down in his garage Martin teaches his buddies to play stuff like "96 Tears," "My Baby Does the Hanky Panky," "Yummy, Yummy, Yummy," and other hot tunes. In no time at all the boys are cooking with gas (carbon dioxide, most likely, considering the local atmosphere). Martin, in a flash of inspiration, changes his name to Kim Fowley and records a kick-ass practice session for use as a demo tape. A cassette of the demo goes off to Bixby back on earth, who, not surprisingly, doesn't know what to make of it. The problem, however, is not only with Bixby's lameness. Martin's stay on earth has left him with subtle but severe brain damage (due to prolonged periods of close proximity to cathode-ray tubes), and consequently his re-creations of the Top 40 deviate substantially from the original artifacts. To fill the holes left by the failure of his memory, Martin has added bits of improvised Martian bebop. Bix, unable to tell shit from shinola, shrugs bewilderedly and passes the tape to a friend, someone more versed in things esoteric than he. The friend, a guy named Ralph, listens to the tape once and knows, without having to think, what must be done. Immediately upon waking up the next morning he forms a record company. Immodestly naming the label after himself, he then releases Uncle Martin's demo tape under the name *The Residents' Third Reich'n Roll.*

The idea of *alien-ness* is essential to the Residents' muzick. Not self-conscious weirdness or strangeness for its own sake, but skillful utilization of creative deviation. Kind of like ripping up a patch of grass and cultivating a beautiful lawn of weeds. It's the attitude of ignoring the rules everyone else takes for granted (coming from a vantage point beyond them, really) and shaping any material one chooses into an object of demented brilliance and unquestionable

continued on page 36

COMIX

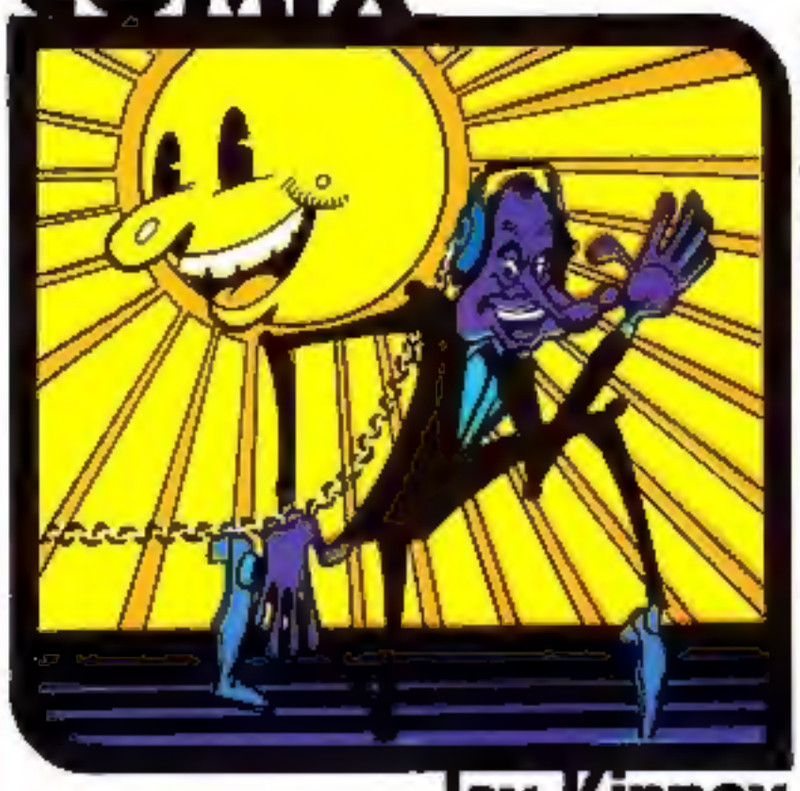


Illustration by Bob Smith

Jay Kinney

Nineteen seventy was a year of transition for the Underground comix movement. The days of *Zap*'s preeminence in the field were rapidly departing as more and more comix were published. Three of the *Zap* cartoonists, in fact, had already left San Francisco—Rick Griffin and Gilbert Shelton to the Los Angeles area, and Crumb to a chicken farm in Potter Valley, California.

Zap #4, published in 1969, had been busted in New York City and Berkeley that same year on obscenity charges (due in large part to Crumb's strip, "Joe Blow," a coy tale of rosy-cheeked incest), and the Print Mint was nervously beginning to distribute copies again only after a lengthy hiatus.

Zap #5, new in 1970, reflected the darkened mood of Manson, Altamont, and the stepped-up Vietnam War. The issue overflowed with guns, knives, bludgeonings, and explosions. Robert Williams, ex-designer of decals and T-shirts for Big Daddy Roth, opened and closed the comic with his complex brushwork and ironic humor —genuinely exciting stuff. It was a strong issue, all in all, possibly *Zap*'s peak, but the old goofy humor was in a distinct minority and beginning to look like an endangered species. In fact, #5 was the last *Zap* for three years until #6 appeared in 1973.

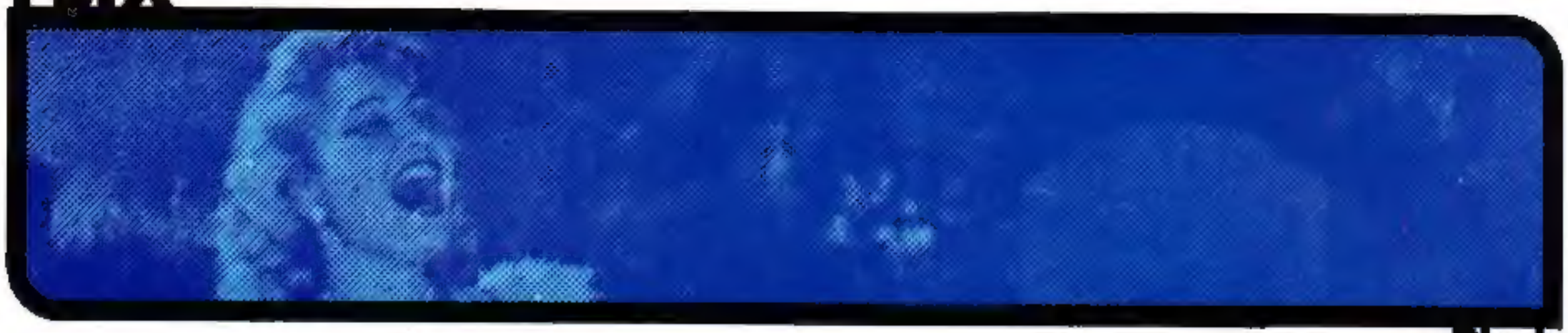
With the ongoing collapse of the counterculture and UG papers causing most of the other UG cartoonists to cluster together for support all the more, it is little surprise that the nature of the comix produced was changing. The new trends of horror and SF comix, mentioned last column, represented a subtle shift away from socially engaged comix to a more self-generated terrain. *Skull*, for instance, in its EC homage was almost a comic about comics. That is, your appreciation of the book increased if you were familiar with the old ECs and probably decreased if you weren't.

This tendency toward the ingrown was certainly present in *Thrilling Murder Comics*, published in 1971 by Gary Arlington. An exercise in gore (complete with special red ink inside to lend color to all the blood), *TM* made the most sense to readers familiar with forties crime comics, who hated the censorship of the Comics Code Authority and therefore vicariously enjoyed the spectacle of latter-day cartoonists thumbing their noses at good taste with a vengeance.

Clearly, this was not going to capture a mass audience, but that wasn't its goal. Rather, this brand of UG represented a rare opportunity for cartoonists to follow their whims and impulses, to do extravagant tributes to their favorite childhood comics, or to try to outdo them.

continued on page 38

FLIX



Bhob

Dementia My Name in Sheboygan

de.men'ti.a, *n. [L., fr. demens, dementis,* mad, fr. *de+mens* mind.*]* Insanity; in psychiatry, any condition of deteriorated mentality. *syn* see INSANITY

—Webster's New International Dictionary

Ever see *Dementia?*"

Ask many knowledgeable film buffs this question, and they'll usually say, "Oh, you mean Francis Ford Coppola's horror movie *Dementia 13?*" No, I don't mean Coppola's *Dementia 13* (1962) with Launa Anders. I mean John Parker's dream-within-a-dream *Dementia* (1953), with Bruno VeSota. *Downbeat* called *Dementia* "the first foreign film made in Hollywood." The British Film Institute's *Monthly Film Bulletin* felt "its striking hallucinatory sequences evoke those of *Citizen Kane* and *The Lady from Shanghai.*" And the New York Censor Board banned *Dementia* because they found it "inhuman, indecent, and the quintessence of gruesomeness." A pinnacle of Hollywood B moviemaking, *Dementia* is today almost totally forgotten.

continued on page 70

SF

Illustration by Dan Steffan

Steve Brown

In some circles, Robert Heinlein is worshiped with the kind of fanatical devotion usually reserved for the sterner members of the ancient Egyptian pantheon. He is one of the Big Three SF writers known to the world at large—along with Isaac Asimov and Arthur C. Clarke (Ray Bradbury, a powerful writer in the forties and fifties, who has allowed himself to become the Rod McKuen of SF, is in his own category). At his peak, Heinlein's storytelling prowess was unmatched in the field. I, like countless others, cut my SF teeth on the series of "juveniles" he produced in the fifties.

Advancing age and an unwillingness to understand just how different the world had become caused Heinlein to inflict a series of increasingly embarrassing self-indulgences on the literary market, beginning with the fuzzy hedonism of *Stranger in a Strange Land*, surely one of the most overrated SF novels of all time. Then, after the naive fascism of *Glory Road* and the unabashed racism of *Farnham's Freehold*, he wrote his last great novel, *The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress*. The welcome relief of that book was quickly broken by the publication of the hideous atrocity of *I Will Fear No Evil*, a book about a dying old man who has his brain transplanted into the body of a beautiful young woman (most of the novel is a display of puritanical prurience, as the man/woman's sexual career is sniggered over for three hundred pages). His next novel was *Time Enough for Love*, a huge rambling waste of trees that follows the exploits of Lazarus Long, "superstud of the starways, better than any six men," as he impregnates his way around the galaxy, spewing off Heinleinian philosophy like a sewage pump ("You can have peace or you can have freedom. Don't ever count on having both at once." "A true lady takes off her dignity with her clothes and does her whorish best." "Peace is an extension of war by political means"). Reading through *Time Enough for Love* is an exercise in masochism matched only by the experience of sitting through a week-long Andy Warhol film festival.

Reading the excesses of a writer idolized in one's youth is an agonizing experience. There is a temptation to excuse things that would be intolerable in a new writer. But I firmly believe that a book should be judged on its own merits; that an author's early triumphs cannot excuse his later failures. All of Heinlein's early work is in print, and most of it is highly recommended.

A couple of years ago, I reread the complete

continued on page 34

COMIX INT'L

Maurice Horn

In the international pantheon of comic art, Belgium occupies a rank out of all proportion to its size. This tiny country (population eleven million), wedged between Germany and France, further split between Dutch-speaking Flemings and French-speaking Walloons, has been a marching ground for attacking and retreating armies through the centuries. Yet, it has maintained a remarkable bicultural identity. In the field of comics, while the Flemish strips can be seen as an extension of the Dutch production (with characteristics of their own), their French-language counterparts represent a genuine national phenomenon best summed up in one name: Hergé. For all practical purposes, Belgian comics simply didn't exist before Hergé.

Hergé's first foray into comic art was *Totor de la Patrouille des Hannetons* ("Totor of the June Bug Patrol"), which he did for a boy scout newspaper in 1926. In 1929, encouraged by the noted French cartoonist Alain Saint-Ogan, he then

continued on page 40

HM: Since this is your first interview for an American publication, would you tell us how America has affected you.

Moebius: Well, right off, I would say enormously. I wasn't sent to school, and by the time I was seventeen I was already very influenced by American cinema and comic strips. Hollywood touched us, and so did comics like Flash Gordon. Jazz like the bebop and Charlie Parker was fundamental. When I was seventeen I went to the States and took the Greyhound cross-country.

HM: That must have been horrible.

Moebius: [*Laughter*] Well, the bus was horrible, but the experience was amazing. I also went to Mexico and was very influenced by people there — artists and musicians. Everyone at that time was touched by American art, which was fundamentally American but which contested regular American culture. It was the American counterculture that fascinated me.

HM: And today?

Moebius: The US sends the best odors around the world as well as the worst ones. America has the greatest conscious as well as the greatest nonconscious (witness the sexuality, the violence, and the aggression in American culture). But at the same time there's an American spirituality that is modern and new.

HM: But the Westerns that you've done, like "Blueberry," for example; aren't they traditionally American and not part of the counterculture?

Moebius: Yes, but it's integrating the countryside because the counterculture is totally urban. The Westerns I did, and still do, incorporate the land, the trees, the sky, the light of the American land, which I love. I have a lot of emotion for the US, but it's also global emotion.

HM: You mentioned earlier a "conscious" and a "nonconscious." Do you think you could explain what you mean by those two terms?

Moebius: I'll explain it this way. For example, when we're born we learn how to breathe nonconsciously, and we do it the way we always have. But the nonconscious is vulnerable, and it takes all the stresses of infancy, the constraints and problems, and integrates them into the breathing process. So when one grows, one is still breathing the way one did in the past, which is far away. To achieve perfection then, in one's breathing, one has to learn to breathe again, consciously.

HM: In other words, you try to transform your nonconscious into consciousness?

Moebius: We're all trying to transform the nonconscious into the conscious, to change ignorance into knowledge. And the more one raises the nonconscious into our conscious sphere, to have a vision of ourselves, our nonconsciousness grows finer and more narrow. One can visualize it as a pyramid.

HM: But we can't be conscious of ourselves all of the time.

Moebius: It's difficult. We all breathe and walk and stand without thinking about it, because we do it nonconsciously. But there are ways we can know those mechanisms intimately, by living them. For example, if we lose our sense of standing upright, we can reinvent and find, through our consciousneas, a vertical sense.

HM: How does this conscious/nonconscious dialectic work in your drawing? I would think that a lot of what you draw comes from your nonconscious.

Moebius: Exactly, but I've brought it out with my consciousness. For example, when I was twenty I'd draw things that were typical of adolescents — the same symbols of love, of the cosmic; it was automatic, like breathing; but then I started to organize those signs, to integrate them into my knowledge of the universe, my relationships with other beings, with myself, with the divine. I energize the obscure beings in me, the spontaneous; I name them; I push them out of the darkness and into the light and then little by little . . .

HM: It's your conscious, then, that's leading you in your work?

Moebius: Yes. I've drained my nonconscious so that it's become much smaller, less vague and horizontal. I've raised it.

HM: Do you use drugs to change your conscious state?

Moebius: I used to, but I don't anymore. I don't believe in anything toxic like drugs, alcohol, coffee, or tobacco. I don't eat meat and try not to eat too much sugar. Taking drugs is a descent of the conscious. When I first did them, and I did a lot and I don't regret it, they opened me up and I learned a lot. But I try to reach a higher state than a drugged one (because as I said drugs are a descent) by myself, by my conscious. And that's true of my science fiction.

HM: Then why don't you read science fiction anymore?

Moebius: Trying to enter the land of one's conscious makes one *live* science fiction. For example, a science fiction writer might imagine that he is caught in a hole and he's trying to get out of it. Yet there might be others who know several means of getting out of the hole, and even more people who live outside the hole. I find that the moment one finds a clear vision of the highs and the lows, the past and the future and even the present, and one decides to live in that part that is the future, then one becomes a person of science fiction. Instead of it being something imaginary and political, it becomes something very personal.

HM: Do you think your life now is science fiction? I know you live on a farm without electricity and telephone.

Moebius: We just got a telephone [*laughter*].

HM: Anyway . . .

continued on page 25

THE MOEBIUS INTERVIEW

by Diana K. Bletter

SHORE LEAVE

PART 2 · by MŒBIUS

RESUMÉ: SPACEMAN J.D. FOSTER DRANK KOKS WITHOUT STRIKING! HE'S BECOME A METAMORPHIC MESS!

WILL YOU STOP NOW? CAN'T YOU SEE WHAT'S GOING ON? WEIRD THINGS ARE HAPPENING!

A CURIOUS REACTION! EARTHMEN HAVE A REALLY MAD METABOLISM....

MUST YOU ALWAYS GET INTO FOOLISHNESS? HUH?

GET ME DOWN FROM UP HERE!

IT'S NOT ME! I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING!

AIE! HUH? WHAT?

ASTONISHING!

A THING FROM ANOTHER WORLD... HA, HA! EXTRAVAGANT!

THAT'S IT-- I'VE GOT ONE! MASTER COOM—PLEASE! COULD YOU HELP ME PULL THIS... AH, THIS THING...?

SWEAR TO ME THAT YOU'LL NEVER DO THAT AGAIN!

I SWEAR!

STRANGE METAMORPHOSES....

WELL, NOW! THIS EARTHMAN PROBLEM... IT WON'T BE A PIECE OF MOZELLE.*

MY OPINION IS TO MAKE QUICKLY THE MEDICINE AGFAN X45...!

MŒB

*A KIND OF PHARAGONESCIAN CAKE

ALAS, IT'S ALREADY TOO LATE... CHECK THE TEXTURE OF THESE RIBBONS—HE'S IN THE PNOUKHE STAGE!

REGRETTABLE! IF IT CONTINUES, HE BECOMES CONTAGIOUS!

MASTER COOM! MAY I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION, PLEASE?!

AH, BOBCTOO! WHY HAS IT ENDED, THE MAGNIFICENT SOLO BY TAHARKZAIN?

IT'S, WELL, BECAUSE OF... UHH...

MISFORTUNE HAS DESCENDED UPON THE LITTLE ORCHESTRA...

OH, MY! HE'S CAUGHT IT!

MY POOR TAHARKZAIN! WHAT A TERRIBLE STATE TO FIND YOU IN! AND THE CONCERT AT ZEHO-RENN PLAZA TOMORROW EVENING—RUINED!

JUST A SIMPLE DISEASE—NOT IMPORTANT!

NORMAL—USUAL SYMPTOMS!

HERE—TWO GOMMETTE SUPPOSITORIES OF PHLOU GREASE. A RADICAL TREATMENT, BUT NECESSARY. INSERT THEM IN THE SPHINCTERS UNDER EACH ARM—RED FOR THE LEFT, BLUE FOR THE RIGHT.... AS IT TAKES EFFECT YOU MUST RECITE THE NINETEEN MANTRAS OF ATTENTIVE MELANCHOLY. BY TOMORROW MORNING EVERYTHING WILL BE NORMAL AGAIN....!

WELL, THAT'S GOOD NEWS, ANYWAY!

WE ARE OBLIGED TO GO SEE A BANTMA WIZARD. I KNOW OF A GOOD ONE... BAZZ, THAT'S HIS NAME—BAZZ!... BESIDE THE PARK OF MINTS! AH, YES! BE CAREFUL NOT TO OVERLOOK THE LEAST BIT OF RIBBON... OTHERWISE... HMMM...

BRIING!

HANG IT! SOMEONE'S AT THE DOOR!

AND AT JUST THIS MOMENT! I'LL GO!

HELLO, HELLO! IS THIS THE "GOLD PILKIN" NIGHTCLUB THAT'S OPEN ALL DAY LONG... WHERE I CAN HAVE FUN... WHERE I...?

HMM... NOT REALLY!... THERE'S NO FUN HERE! UH... NO... IN FACT IT'S RATHER SAD HERE.

HA HA... SURE IT IS! BUT IS IT TRUE THAT... SOMEONE TOLD ME... THAT YOU'VE GOT THE PRETTIEST GIRLS IN PHARAGO HERE? AND THEY DANCE, AND ALL THAT, WITH THEIR ...AH, THEIR CHESTS?

NOT AT ALL! NOT AT ALL!

IT'S REALLY TOO BAD, BUT ALL THE GIRLS HERE ARE UGLY... NOT IN SHAPE! AND BESIDES, THEY'VE ALL GONE TO THE COUNTRY... NOTHING HERE! ANYWAY, WE'RE CLOSED TODAY—ALL DAY LONG... I'M VERY SORRY....

PFUIE! THIS IS NOT WHAT I HAD EXPECTED! I'VE BEEN ON THE PII FORE MORE'N EIGHT MONTHS—IN DEEP SPACE! PFF....

PERHAPS YOU MIGHT TRY THE "GREAT BLUE BALL"—IT'S RIGHT OVER THERE! THE LARGE BRICK HOUSE! OFTEN HAS BEAUTIFUL WOMEN WITH CHESTS! ACROSS THE WAY!

HEY, THANKS PAL! THAT'S GREAT! I'M GONNA HAVE ME SOME FUN!

MOEBIUS 10

AH, MASTER COOM—AREN'T YOU AFRAID FOR THAT YOUNG EARTHMAN? THE "GREAT BLUE BALL" IN THE MIDDLE OF THE PERIOD OF SACRED MOULTING? THE POOR FELLOW COULD GET HIMSELF BADLY SLASHED UP.

AAH! HE WANTED WOMEN WHO DANCED WITH THEIR CHESTS, DIDN'T HE?

LATER, AFTER THE TWO PHARAGOS HAVE DONNED RATHER SILLY COSTUMES....

FINALLY! IT MAY HAVE BEEN AN OUTRAGEOUS TRICK TO PLAY UPON THAT EARTHMAN, BUT AFTER ALL, MY NERVES ARE IN AN IRRITATED STATE—THESE BEINGS ARE ALWAYS, ALWAYS SO GROSSLY IGNORANT! THEY MUST ALWAYS, ALWAYS BE TAKEN IN CHARGE—LIKE BABIES!

TO WHOM ARE YOU SPEAKING, MASTER COOM?

YOU'RE RIGHT! IT'S HENRY!

RRRRM

Moebius
11

LATER, IN A COMMERCIAL STREET NEAR THE PARK OF MINTS...

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE TRADITIONAL CELEBRATION OF MUTATIONS... I FORGOT!

SO MANY PEOPLE!

PARDON ME... IS DR. BAZZ IN?

OH, YES— HE'S THERE. AS MAGICAL AS EVER!

EXCELLENT... REALLY EXCELLENT!

PLEASE HURRY, MASTER COOM... IT'S MOVING AROUND IN THE BAG...!

TSK, TSK! A NEW TRANSFORMATION! PATIENCE... I HEAR STEPS APPROACHING.

KNOCK KNOCK

WE HAVE AN EARTHMAN WHO DRANK KOKS WITHOUT STRIKING— HAS REACHED THE PNOUKHE STAGE—NO LONGER CURABLE WITH AGFAN X45! BANTMA MAGIC IS NECESSARY TO AVOID CONTAGIOUSNESS! ...BUT QUICKLY, BECAUSE THE NEW TRANSFORMATION IS IN PROGRESS IN THE BAG...!

QUICKLY!

I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND A BIT OF WHAT YOU SAID, MY POOR FRIEND, BUT DO COME IN, ANYWAY.

THE WIZARD CONDUCTS THE TWO PARAGOS TO HIS EXOTIC BIO-MAGIC ROOM ...

AH! NOT SURPRISINGLY, HE'S OUT OF THE PNOUCHE STAGE NOW.

.. HAVING ENTERED THE "ULTRA FLUIDITY MOLECULAR OSK-BERGAN" STAGE!

THE "ULTRA-FLUIDITY MOLECULAR OSK-BERGAN" STAGE—OF COURSE, OF COURSE! THE PROBLEM IS THAT THIS IS, OF COURSE, THE DAY OF MUTATION-CELEBRATIONS, AND ADDITIONALLY THE CONJUNCTION OF THE THREE MOONS AND THE GREAT FASMA, AS YOU KNOW....

IF YOU WISH TO EFFECT A CURE WE MUST TAKE THE EARTHMAN TO A SPECIAL AND SECRET PLACE—THE STAJIRKE DESERT!

WHAT!?

BUT—! THE STAJIRKE IS MORE THAN TEN THOUSAND SLC* FROM HERE! AND IT'S A FRIGHTFUL PLACE!

I MIGHT ADD THAT MY FEE WILL BE 700 MAFLONS!

THAT'S AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT!

700 MAFLONS! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!

MOEB 13

*APPROXIMATELY 17,062 MILES

MASTER COOM, THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE! I CANNOT CONSIDER SUCH AN EXTRAORDINARY EXPEDITION—ESPECIALLY AT 700 MAFLONS.! AH, HAD I ONLY IMAGINED THAT THIS EARTHMAN WOULD DRINK HIS KOKS WITHOUT TAKING SUCH AN ELEMENTARY PRECAUTION AS STRIKING... BUT IT SERVES NOTHING TO LAMENT UPON THE DEEDS OF THE PAST, I FEAR...

DO NOT ABANDON HOPE.... PERHAPS AN INEXPENSIVE SOLUTION IS POSSIBLE....

LET US GO!

A FEW MOMENTS LATER....

THE PROBLEM WITH WIZARDS OF THE BANTHA SCHOOL IS THEIR STRONG POLARIZATION ON THE TELLURIUM ZONE—OF WHICH THE STAJIRKE DESERT IS THE CENTER OF ENERGY. OUT OF DATE TRADITION, THAT—SUPERSTITION! TIMES CHANGE....

AT THE CITY'S EXIT....

FILL IT UP WITH GAS AND TWO HORNS OF SURVIVAL, PLEASE.

CAN YOU TELL ME—HOW MANY SLC FROM HERE TO THE "RAVINE OF CLOUDS"?

WITH YOUR VEHICLE, YOU SHOULD GET THERE IN 3 HOURS.* THAT MAKES 7 AND 5, 15 AND 15... 12 CREDITS AND 30 MINS.

NOEB 14

*5 HOURS STANDARD TIME.

TAKE A RIGHT AT THE NEXT CORNER.

WHY TRAVEL TEN THOUSAND SLC AND SPEND A FORTUNE? THERE ARE CLOSER PLACES OF "POWER" HERE, IN THE STAED DESERT! AND AFTER ALL, I KNOW A FEW SACRED DANCES FOR EXOTIC BIOCARBONATE MUTATIONS MYSELF!

I'M WITH YOU, MASTER COOM. I'VE HEARD OF A NEW EFFECTIVE EMERGENCE OF.. OF POSITIVE TELLURITY IN THE, UM, STAED DESERT MYSELF.... AND, AH, I KNOW A FEW SONGS.... UH... LET'S HOPE... LET'S HOPE THAT... THAT NOTHING... UM, THAT THERE ARE NO, UM... PROBLEMS....

MOEB 15

AHHH..GOOD TO RELIEVE THE BLADDER...!

AS LONG AS WE'RE STOPPED, LET'S EAT IT'S GETTING LATE!...

NIGHT COMES SOON! THE "RAVINE OF CLOUDS" IS NOT FAR NOW—WE'LL GO UP TO THE SUMMIT IN THE DARK...!

TOUCH!

NOT SO FAST, BALTINFLOR! NOT SO FAST!

LATER IN THE CLEAR PHARA-GON-ESCIAN NIGHT....

HERE WE ARE AT LAST! ONE CAN FEEL FROM HERE THE SPIRAL WAVES... HMM! NOT IDEAL FOR EXOTIC BIO-CARBONATE MUTATION..!

MASTER COOM, I'M BE-GINNING TO HAVE SERIOUS DOUBTS ABOUT THE SUCCESS OF OUR ENTER-PRISE!

BEST NOT TO LET THE DEVILS OF DOUBT GNAW! MUST LOCK ALL THAT AWAY!

NOW TO CLIMB TO THE SUMMIT OF THE "RAVINE OF CLOUDS"

M.BILLS 17

QUICKLY! SOON IT WILL BE THE HOUR OF CONJUGATION WITH THE GREAT FASMA-AFTER-WARDS, TOO LATE!

PUFF PUFF..! THIS EARTHMAN HAS DEFINITELY CAUSED ME MUCH TROUBLE!

A LITTLE MORE EFFORT- ALMOST AT SUMMIT!

FINALLY.

NOW INTO THE RAVINE...

MŒBIUS 18

THE NEXT MORNING.

SO, FOSTER STILL HASN'T RESPONDED TO THE CALL? ANNOYING! MOST ANNOYING!

AH, YES! FOSTER- SMALL BEARDED MAN...!

MANY MEN CAME BACK IN A SAD STATE, SIR! IT SEEMS WE SHOWED UP RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE CELEBRATION OF MUTATIONS...THE AUTHORITIES HERE CLAIM THAT IT'S ALWAYS LIKE THIS DURING PHASE IV.

AH, THEY'RE IN PHASE IV!? WELL, THE RULES ARE STRICT-WE'LL HAVE TO ABANDON FOSTER HERE! THE NEXT SHIP WILL BE HERE IN THREE YEARS AND WILL TRY HIM ON THE CHARGE OF DESERTION. GERARD, WARN THE LOCAL PEOPLE ABOUT THE SITUATION! AND BEGIN THE PROCEDURES FOR LIFTOFF!

PA

SB 3"11

PII

I'M TELLING YOU-WE CAN'T GO ANY FASTER! AHA! LOOK- THERE'S THE ASTROPORT TOWER!

I'M GONNA MISS THE PII AND BE STUCK HERE ON THIS CRAZY WORLD FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE..!

DON'T WORRY, EARTHMAN! LIFE ON PHARAGONESCIA IS VERY AMUSING WHEN THERE'S NO CELEBRATION OF MUTATIONS

MŒB 19

BEGIN THE COUNTDOWN!

PII TO CONTROL! PII TO CONTROL! ACTIVATE THE INSTASIS CIRCUITS!

PII

WELL, TOUBIB, HOW ARE THINGS HERE?

ON THE WHOLE, WE DON'T HAVE THAT MUCH TO COMPLAIN ABOUT A FEW LIGHT CONTUSIONS, SOME MINOR FOOD POISONINGS, AND A COUPLE OF BITES—NOT VERY SERIOUS. ON THE OTHER HAND, WE DO HAVE TWO CASES. A MECHANIC WHO HAD A PAIR OF WINGS GRAFTED ON, AND A SECOND-CLASS CREWMAN WHOSE CASE IS, UM, EVEN MORE BIZARRE!

AND HERE HE IS... HE'S BEEN TOTALLY SKINNED AND HE'S HIGHLY DELIRIOUS!

POOR FELLOW!

AHHH.. I SEE HOW IT IS...!

YES, ISN'T IT!

RAH! WOMEN!— WOMEN WHO DANCE WITH THEIR CHESTS RAH!

MCEBINJ

PROMISE ME YOU'LL WAIT TO SEE IF I GET BACK ON THE PIIIZ!

OF COURSE, OF COURSE! BUT YOU HAVE NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT— YOU GET ON BOARD YOUR SHIP! FEAR NOT! GO ON, NOW...!

UH, BUT... IT'S JUST THAT TO GET BACK IN HERE YOU HAVE TO RETURN YOUR PASS...!

HEY, LISTEN! I LOST IT WHEN I LOST MY UNIFORM! CALL THE PIII- THEY'LL CONFIRM THAT A J.D. FOSTER WAS MISSING AT THE CHECK-IN! PLEASE! I'LL MISS THE LIFT-OFF!

BASICALLY, I DO UNDERSTAND HIS AGITATION!...

HE SHOULD BE DANCING FOR JOY! A MIRACLE TO HAVE RE-FOUND HIS NORMAL FORM!

PFU! I AM TIRED FROM TOO LONG A NIGHT-MAGIC, FLIGHTS, JUMPS, CEREMONIES, SONGS, DANCES, MUTATIONS, ASSAULTS OF DEMONS... TENSION TOO STRONG.. EARTHMAN TOO HARD... MASTER COOM TOO OLD...!

I REALLY BELIEVED THAT WE'D NEVER DO IT...! THERE'S SOMETHING STRANGE ABOUT THE STRUCTURE OF EARTHMEN — A SORT OF PANIC RESISTANCE TO THE INFLUX OF ENERGY... AND A VERY HEAVY MENTAL PLANE.... IT'S HARDLY SURPRISING THAT THEIR INSTABILITY ON THE MOLECULAR COHERENCE LEVEL PLAYS STRANGE GAMES ON THEM...!

COME ON—!

WELL? WELL?

'ALLO? SUTB? GUARDHOUSE HERE... AT THE OSDINE LAREX.. YEAHHH! COULD YOU GIVE ME THE PIIIZ... NO— AT ONCE! I KNOW... I KNOW...

THAT TAKES CARE OF IT! IT'S ALL ARRANGED! THE PIII HAS BEEN NOTIFIED. THEY STOPPED THE COUNTDOWN, AND A VAN IS COMING TO PICK YOU UP..

THANK GOD!

THERE! INCIDENT CLOSED. BACK TO THE HOUSE AND SLEEP..

GOODBYE, EARTHMAN! TRY TO KEEP YOUR SHAPE!

SO LONG, PHARAGO!

AHAHAHA! "TRY TO KEEP YOUR SHAPE!" TYPICAL PHARAGO HUMOR! AHAHA!

TRUTHFULLY, I AM A LITTLE WORRIED. ..THE OPERATION LAST NIGHT WAS NOT PERFECT. A RELAPSE, IN THE SHIP... IF THERE IS CONTAGION... WELL, I DO WORRY..!

TOO BAD— ALL THIS BECAUSE OF A SIMPLE ERROR, A MINOR OVER-SIGHT....

OVERSIGHT OF THE RULE IS NO EXCUSE...AND HE WHO DRINKS HIS KOKS WITHOUT STRIKING PASSES THROUGH THE GATE OF MISFORTUNE!

MOEBIUS 22

ONE MONTH LATER IN REALLY DEEP SPACE....

WE WERE DOING ROUTINE MAINTENANCE WORK ON THE COAXIAL GENERATORS AND ALL OF A SUDDEN HE WAS TRANSFORMED-RIGHT BEFORE MY EYES!

I WAS THERE. IT STARTED WITH HIS LEGS!

MAJOR- IT'S UPSETTING THE OTHER PATIENTS!

I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS! STARK-CALL THE COMMANDER! TELL HIM TO COME TO THE INFIRMARY.. IT'S URGENT!

CAREFUL! THOSE TUBES UNDERNEATH ARE STARTING TO GROW AGAIN!

NO-WOMEN WITH CHESTS! ARGH!

JONES, PLEASE! SHUT HIM UP!

WHAT'S GOING ON?

APPARENTLY, THERE'S A MONSTER ON BOARD!

A MONSTER!? THAT'S THE LAST STRAW!

ISOLATE THAT THING IN THE QUARANTINE ROOM!

INCREDIBLE!... UNHEARD OF!.. LOOK! IT'S CHANGING COLORS!

YOU'RE SURE IT'S NOT CONTAGIOUS?

OKAY, I'VE GOT HIS COORDINATES-HERE'S HIS FILE! HE'S THE ONE WHO WAS LATE GETTING BACK FOR LIFTOFF ON PHARAGONESCIA! THEY HAD TO HALT THE COUNTDOWN....

BUT, KOWALSKY—WHAT'S SO URGENT THAT I—I!—MUST GO DOWN TO THE INFIRMARY...?

I DON'T REALLY KNOW, COMMANDER, BUT IT SEEMS ONE OF THE MEN GOT SICK....

IS THAT ALL?!

WELL, IT'S A STRANGE SICKNESS... WHICH... UH... UMM...

A STRANGE SICKNESS, YOU SAY?

STRANGE AND CONTAGIOUS, COMMANDER!

FIN.

NUEBIUS 24

THE MOEBIUS INTERVIEW
by Diana K. Bletter

continued from page 6

Moebius: Yes. To quote what an American SF author, I think it was Asimov, once said, "The future is no longer what it was." A while ago, SF was filled with monstrous rocket ships and planets; it was a naive and materialistic vision, which confused external space with internal space, which saw the future as an extrapolation of the present. It was a victim of an illusion of a technological sort, of a progression without stopping towards a consummation of energy. But we've completely changed that vision. It's been a sharp, radical change, and somewhat brutal.

HM: Why brutal?

Moebius: Because all those beautiful projects we believed in are gone. But the real sense of science fiction is the discovery that the voyage is interior, and the real energy, the rockets of the past, is what is contained in people's spirits.

HM: One doesn't have to read other people's visions then, one can make the discovery oneself?

Moebius: Well, that, and also the fact that the "new planet" of old science fiction is right here: it's the earth.

HM: Why do you say that?

Moebius: Because it's here. When you start to live a life more harmonious with the world it's science fiction. The new world is not the moon, it's the earth, and the vessel is yourself. You just have to find a carburetor and go. [*Philippe Manoevre, a* Metal Hurlant *editor, interrupts at this point to say, "The only thing I disagree with is that for Moebius the carburetor is water and for me it's bourbon."*]

HM: With that theory in mind then, why does one work or read or do anything?

Moebius: What you do is only a way for you to arrive at yourself. Think of an energy, X, like a river, and you have to take that energy and transform it . . . . You're constructing yourself, not destroying yourself, as one does by taking drugs. I'm talking about mental nourishment—films and books, for example.

HM: Isn't that a form of censorship? You read Castaneda, I know, and that influenced you in a positive way.

Moebius: Castaneda helped me to clean out my system, but what was good for me then might not necessarily be true for me now. Mentally, I'm different. You have to decide what will be good and bad for you.

HM: Do you think you're integrated into society where you live?

Moebius: Yes, but I'm also on the side of it. I don't try to amuse myself to give people pleasure.

HM: But don't you draw to please your readers?

Moebius: I'm trying to free myself of that, but it's often what is demanded of me. But I want to do things without thinking of pleasing.

HM: Not even yourself?

Moebius: No.

HM: Then why do you draw?

Moebius: Because I'm forty-three and I've been doing it for twenty-five years. When you've been doing something for so long it's hard to change. It's like a train that's been moving for a while — you can't just stop it. Nothing should be done brutally. There are accidents that happen that can change someone, but that takes a while. And if people around me haven't changed and they still ask me to draw, it's hard to resist. I'm not cut off from the world.

HM. Then what do you want to do for your readers?

Moebius: I like to provoke them. When we were talking before about using energy from a river, well, I want to be that river, with shoots and falls and sometimes rapids.

HM: I get the impression when reading some of your strips that you like to tease your readers with your presence, putting in little jokes to constantly remind your readers that Moebius, the author, is there.

Moebius: I don't want my comic strips to be like a miniature train set, with an announcer counting how many fatalities there were. When I was a kid, I used to pretend my fingers were soldiers, and I'd walk them on my pillows, which were mountains filled with snow, etcetera, but I was always aware that I was there.

HM: So you don't want your comic strips to be closed universes, or, as you would say, "airtight garages."

Moebius: Exactly, which is why I called it that. The moment I say it's airtight it ceases to be that.

HM: But when you say it's airtight or hermetic you close it, like with parentheses.

Moebius: Something that is airtight has the appearance of being airtight, one doesn't see the door, doesn't know what is there; one has the impression of being in front of an apple, but in reality one is in front of a piano.

HM: Mmmm . .

Moebius: The apple is airtight — you can't see what is inside it. But the moment you introduce the apple as a piano, as a false piano, then it's no longer hermetic. You know, when I started "The Airtight Garage of Jerry Cornelius" it was just an exercise. The words flew into my head by accident. Then *Metal Hurlant* asked me to do a sequel.

HM: So you found yourself in this garage and you had to find a way out?

Moebius: It was totally nonconscious at first. Then I had to use my consciousness to explain it and get myself out of it. And you see at the end the people find themselves in no place other than the real world. That's true science fiction.

HM. Do you care if your readers don't understand some of your stories?

Moebius: I try to be like a surfer riding on the crest of a wave, and I have to stay on the summit. I can't worry about being comprehensible to everyone. I'm only structured by the human language, which puts into a form the impressions that cross my mind.

HM Your work, then, is translating these "impressions" into another kind of language?

Moebius. Yes. It's pure enjoyment. It's mysterious to see a space look at people in a strange ambiguous light, and then use my rational faculties to translate these into the medium of the comic strip. In reality, the principle of changing things is simple, but how it is applied is amazing and unexpected. It's hard to perceive what's behind the manifestations, to discover the unique principle. What's most important is to see the unique behind the multiples.

HM: Is that your research, then, what you value most?

Moebius: I don't want to be a hypocrite, but it's what I wish. A while ago my only thoughts were to make a lot of money, to be known, to be a conqueror. But it's not what I want now.

HM Is that when you became Moebius?

Moebius: Yes, there was already a negation of former projects.

HM: Changing the subject a little, but speaking of former projects, what was it like working on *Dune*?

Moebius: First of all, *Dune* was one of the best SF books I ever read. The film was different, more extremist. Jodorowsky made the film much more political, which was why it was never made.

HM: Isn't it being made now?

Moebius: No, the version we did got as far as the storyboards. Then it was impossible to find an American producer. It was at the time of Nixon, around 1975, and there was some paranoia about Jodorowsky, whose other films include *El Topo* and *Holy Mountain*. It might be done by Ridley Scott, who did *Alien*, but it will be different.

HM: Will you work on it?

Moebius: That's hard to say. I'm involved in so many projects this year.

HM: Such as?

Moebius: Another series of "Blueberry," which American audiences aren't familiar with, and other comic strips.

HM: How does it make you feel when you think that people in America are reading your comic strips?

Moebius: It really touches me when I read letters in *Heavy Metal* from readers in Kansas City or Chicago who say they want "more Moebius" the way they would ask for Corben, let's say. It's a good feeling that things I learned from America years ago are now going back to America, like a cycle.

HM: Do you believe in God?

Moebius: Yes. That's the first discovery of one's conscious. One becomes aware of perfection, of an absolute, of a larger consciousness, and then one goes in that direction. Of course, it's not a God with a white beard, it can't be closed within an image. That's why the term God is good, because it has become such a cliche it doesn't mean anything.

HM: Can you answer your own question, "Is man good?

Moebius: No. I did that story as a joke, it made me laugh.

HM: Do you believe in extraterrestrials?

Moebius: I was never contacted and never saw one, but I believe in them as much as I believe in people on earth.

HM: So then, dreams and reality are not really in opposition?

Moebius: No, but it depends on what you're comparing. I could say that dreams are the opposite of nightmares, or I could ask you, what's the opposite of black?

HM White.

Moebius: And I could say it's "Taaaaa"

HM: I have the feeling while talking to you that nothing is really how it seems.

Moebius: [*Laughter*] Everything I'm saying now is totally unknown to me, and I don't even want to think about how I'm going to sound to *Heavy Metal* readers when this interview appears.

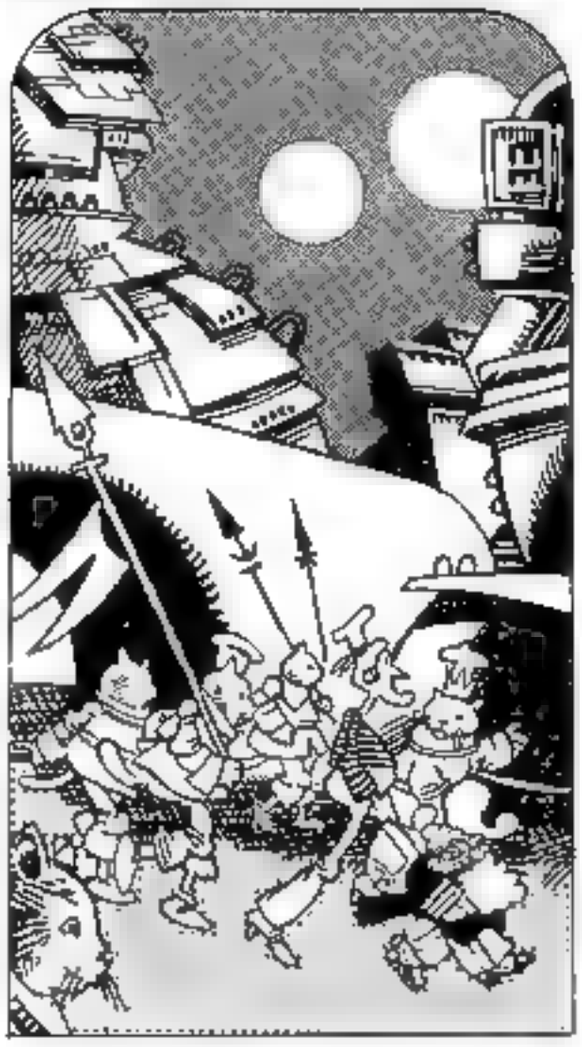
THE ADVENTURES OF PROFESSOR THINTWHISTLE AND HIS INCREDIBLE AETHER FLYER

CHAPTER SEVEN

Perhaps this may strain common credibility, dear reader (dear, understanding, patient reader), *but* having traversed the *Inner Aether* found within SELENA (Queen of the Moon), and having encountered *Flying feathered Aztec serpents* and the like, our aether travelers have made moorage upon the planet Felisia-aleph, a globe inhabited by sentient, talking *cats!* Imagine their surprise!

HOW TO BEGIN TO DESCRIBE THE WONDERMENT OF CATTERSTALL, FELINE CAPITAL OF FELISIA ALEPH?

TO ENCOMPASS THIS MARVEL WOULD IT SUFFICE TO SAY THAT THE ARCHITECTURE BORE LITTLE IN COMMON WITH THAT OF BUFFALO FALLS, PA.?



..OR OF EAST LIVERPOOL, OHIO? OF PARTICULAR NOTE WAS THE PRESENCE ON THE SIDEWALKS, IN RANKS UPON THE BOULEVARDS, AND EVEN UPON THE LEDGES OF THE BUILDINGS, OF A VERY LARGE NUMBER OF **CROQUET WICKETS.**

AT PRECISELY THE MOMENT OF THE PROFESSOR'S NOTICE OF THIS **SIGNAL ODDITY** THERE WAS HEARD RADIATING FROM THE TOPS OF THE BUILDINGS OF THE CAT CITY A SOUND **UNPRECEDENTED** IN THE EXPERIENCE OF THE AETHER TRAVELERS, AS IF THE STRAINS OF A **MULTIPLICITY** OF GUITAR STRINGS WERE BEING **AMPLIFIED** THROUGH SOME **GIGANTIC MEGAPHONE!**

NO CAUSE FOR **ALARM**, PROFESSOR; THE SOUND YOU JUST NOTICED IS BUT A WARNING OF THE IMMINENT APPROACH OF A TRANSFER...

TRANSFER?

YES, YOU SEE, FELESIA COMPRISES NOT **ONE** BUT **THREE** SMALL PLANETS .. WHEN OUR THREE WORLDS ARE ALIGNED GRAVITY *COMBINES* AND ALL UNATTACHED PERSONS ARE DRAWN TO THE CENTRAL GLOBE.

WHY, SUCH A MOVEMENT MUST BE VERY DISLOCATING!

...WHAT OF THOSE CITIZENS WHO WOULD PREFER TO **REMAIN** UPON THE PLANET OF THEIR PRESENT RESIDENCE?

WHY, THEN YOU SIMPLY FIND A ***HOOP*** AND SEIZE ONE!

.. PERHAPS I SHOULD HAVE REMARKED UPON THIS **EARLIER**...

WHEN WE REACH THE **CENTRAL** ORB, WHICH WE CALL "FELISIA- **BETH**," WE WILL CONSULT WITH MY COUSIN, KING CLEMENT VII, AT **FRITZBURGH**...

AND THEN WE MAY FIND OUR WAY BACK TO OUR BELOVED PENNSYLVANIA, EH, HERKIMER?

BUT PROFESSOR, WHAT OF OUR MANSERVANT, JEFFERSON JACKSON CLAY?

AH YES... WE LEFT THAT WOOLY-HEADED **SIMPLETON** ABOARD THE *ARTHUR*...

STILL, IT SHOULD BE AN EASY MATTER TO ARRANGE TO BR.NG OUR VESSEL BETWEEN THE SPACE SEPARATING FELISIA **ALPH** FROM **BETH.**

...AT LEAST, I WOULD VENTURE TO **HOPE** THAT JEFFERSON'S PRIMIT VE GRASP OF...

UH... PROFESSOR...

JEFFERSON!

GAD! HERKIMER, WE ARE **BETRAYED!**

KAF! KAF!

THAT WORTHLESS SCAMP IS ABSCONDING WITH OUR AETHER FLYER!!

From the Cabin Boy's Log, Aether Date 1884 0802

I am assuming the captaincy. As my first official act as captain I am renaming the *Chester Alan Arthur*, which will be known henceforth as the *Crispus Attucks*.

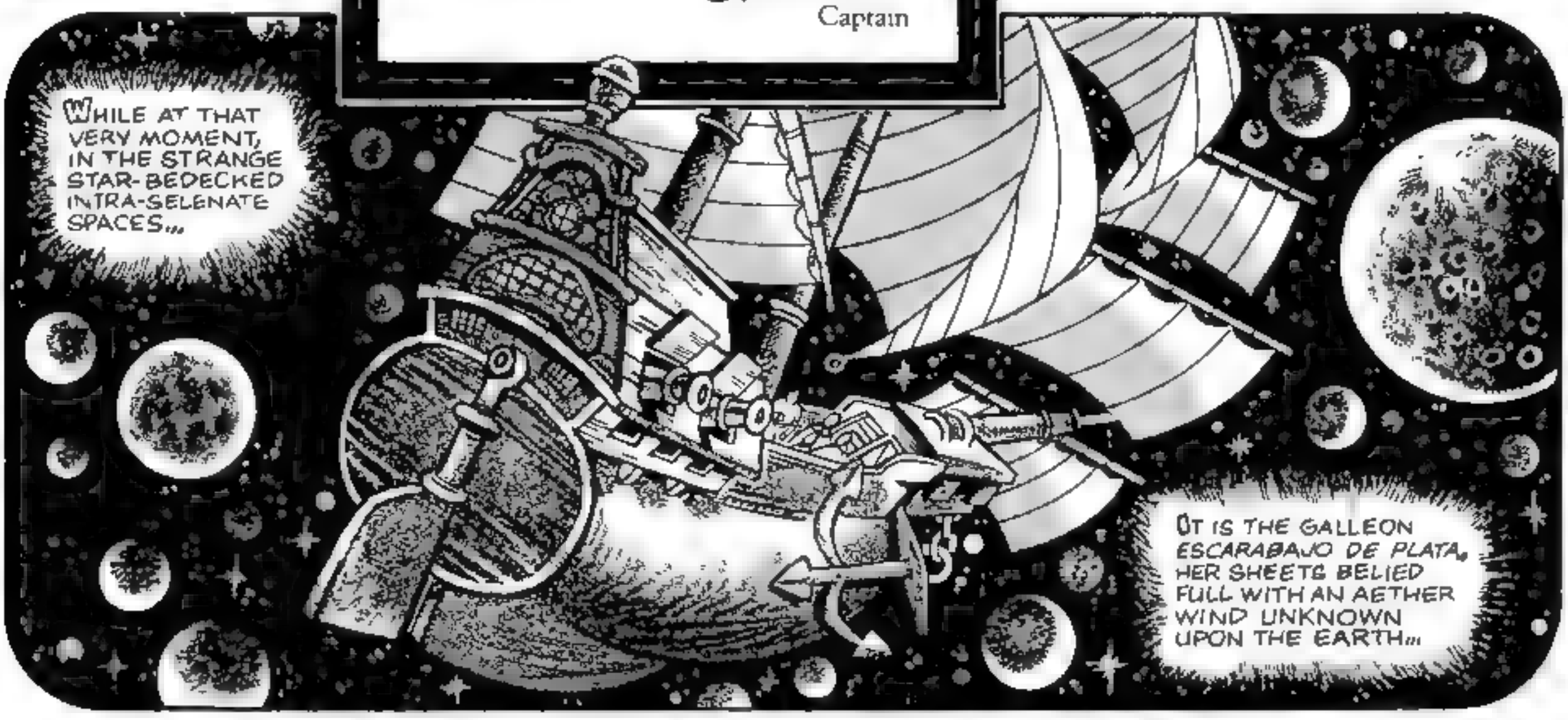
In keeping with my new position I am abandoning my former name, Jefferson Jackson Clay, and re-christening myself *Menelik XX Chaka*, by which name I will henceforth be known.

Having successfully ditched the forces of reaction, ofays T and H, I am now proceeding away from the star system Taphammer and will attempt rendezvous with Captain L y A and his progressive forces

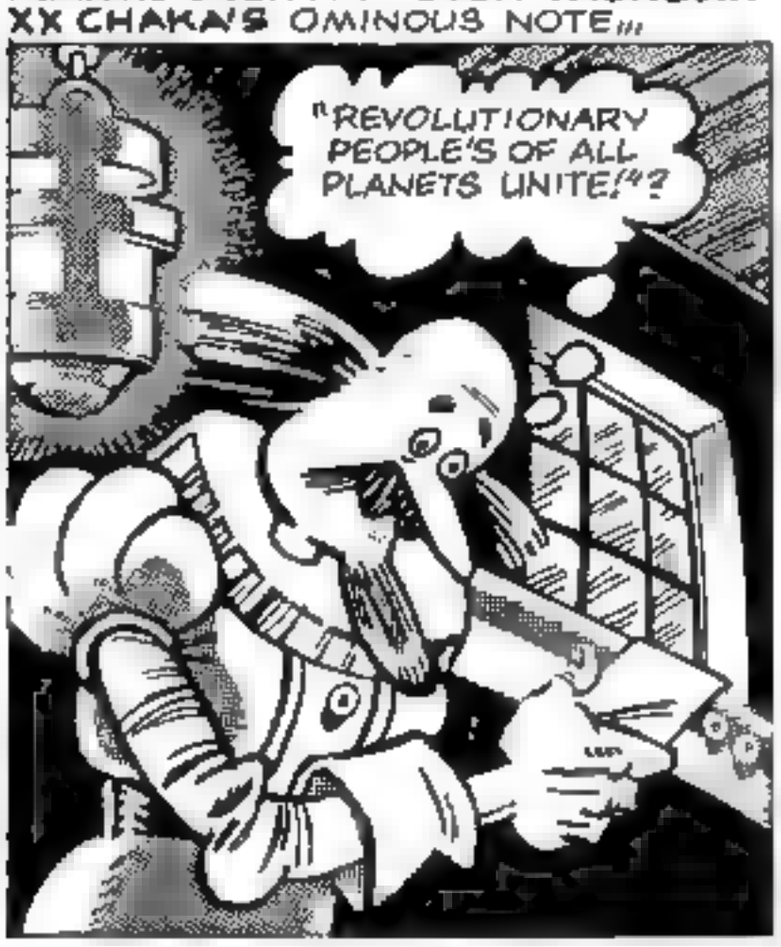
Veneremos!

Chaka

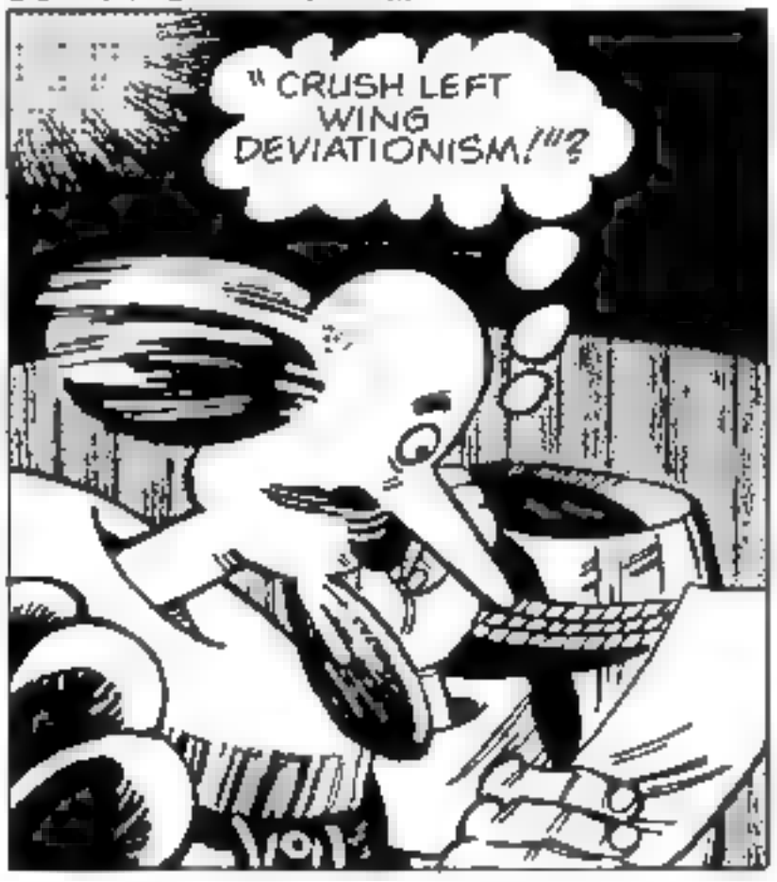
Captain


WHILE AT THAT VERY MOMENT, IN THE STRANGE STAR-BEDECKED INTRA-SELENATE SPACES...
IT IS THE GALLEON *ESCARABAJO DE PLATA*, HER SHEETS BELIED FULL WITH AN AETHER WIND UNKNOWN UPON THE EARTH...

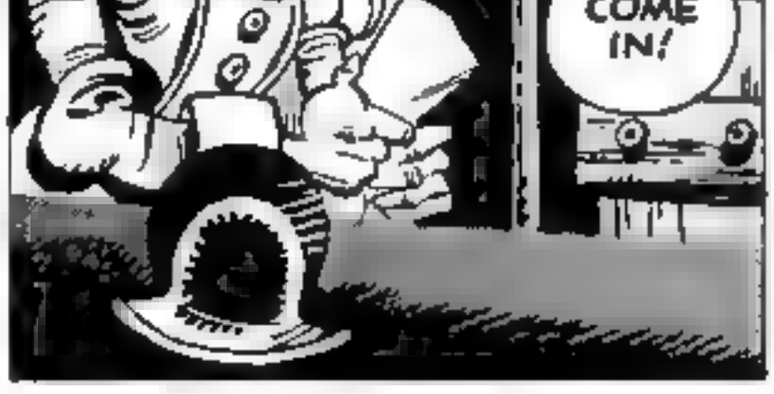
"...AND HER CAPTAIN SITS TROUBLED WITHIN HIS CABIN, HIS KEEN EYES RUNNING OVER AND OVER **MENELIK XX CHAKA'S** OMINOUS NOTE..."



WITH WHAT ASTONISHMENT HAD CAPTAIN LUPE Y ALVARADO READ THE MESSAGE SURREPTITIOUSLY DELIVERED TO HIM BY THE *ARTHUR'S* FORMER LOWLY CABIN BOY...



THE NOTE WAS SIGNED "A FRIEND."



AH, PABLO! I WAS JUST ABOUT TO SEND FOR YOU... HOW DOES THE **CREW** FARE?

NOT **WELL**, MY CAPTAIN!

...THEIR SPIRITS FALL BY THE HOUR! THEY NOW FEEL THAT WE ARE FOREVER **LOST**!

I SEE...

SIGH!

...**WELL**! LET US REFRESH OURSELVES WITH SOME OPORTO...

...WHILE STUDYING THE CHARTS... WOULD YOU BE GOOD ENOUGH TO FETCH THE MAP CASE UNDER MY BUNK?

I CANNOT SEEM TO FIND IT, SIR!

OH?

HERE IT IS!

AND NOW PABLO-- A **TOAST** TO THEIR MAJESTIES!

MEANWHILE, ABOVEDECKS, **EL RATON MIGUELITO,** BOSON OF THE *ESCARABAJO DE PLATA*, ADDRESSES THE CREW...

UNO! DOS! TRES!

¡MADRE DIOS!

HAHA HA! NOW I AM IN COMMAND!

WE'LL RUN THESE SEAS BLOOD RED, EH, YOU SCURVY SCUM?

AND AT PRECISELY THAT VERY MOMEN...

SAIL HO!

TO BE CONTINUED!

CHAIN MAIL

Dear *HM*:

Barry Malzberg's article in your May issue, "Divining at the Edge," is very disturbing to me. He asks, "How many high school students can name five living American novelists or three living serious composers?" He writes as if he means that all high school kids, and those below high school, are illiterate (I'm sure he does not; I can't think of my second favorite author *saying* that). I am in eighth grade in junior high school and, yes, I read *Heavy Metal*, which is, as it says on the cover, "The adult illustrated fantasy magazine." Adult? *Only* for adults? There are a lot of kids who buy and read *HM*, some just to see the nudity. Oh, the nudity and the blood get your attention, and I like that stuff but I *also* like the articles and other things in *HM*. Anyway, *I* can name five hundred living American authors, thirty living serious composers, and—from another part of Mr Malzberg's article—several hundred SF writers. I haven't read them all, but I've seen all their names so many times I can play them back. So can other kids. I don't know about New Jersey, where Mr Malzberg lives, but here in Spring Valley and La Mesa there are a lot of literate junior high and high school students.

Mr. Malzberg, if you happen to read this, I just want to say that I'm disappointed in your article. You're my second favorite author (Harlan Ellison is my first) and I've read a lot of your novels and short stories. I love *Beyond Apollo*, *In the Enclosure*, *The Gamesman*, and *Phase IV* (was the movie of that name based on your book?), but I hate *Herovit's World* and *Malzberg at Large*.

I also hate your article.

Michael Hemmingson
Spring Valley, Calif.

But surely, Michael, you also know kids who boast that they never crack a book except on assignment and for whom reading for pleasure is an unknown experience—TW

Heavy Metal Editor:

At first I didn't care for the idea of the new columns, and I was satisfied with the thought that the idea didn't please others either (as evidenced by *Chain Mail*). I would have been content with not caring and never written if that ass, Barry Malzberg, had not written what he did in the May *Sidebar*.

Who the fuck does he think he is? If he had as much talent in his entire body as Robert A. Heinlein has in his little fingernail he'd be one talented son of a bitch. Mr Heinlein is *the* greatest science fiction writer who has ever lived. His name will be revered by science fiction fans long after the name Barry Malzberg has been forgotten.

Mr. Malzberg's attack on this superb writer was completely unwarranted and is probably symptomatic of his jealousy over Mr. Heinlein's success and his (Malzberg's) relative anonymity. He will *never* achieve the success or stature enjoyed by Mr. Heinlein. He seems to center his attack on belittling a great man and his work while putting the "general public" down for liking what Mr. Heinlein has done. Also, I don't particularly care for the idea that he has generalized and drawn conclusions about the "general public" from visits to suburban New Jersey high schools. And to top it all

continued on page 96

Special Delivery From Cheech & Chong!

Let's Make A New Dope Deal.

The highly illogical successor to *Up In Smoke*.
Their first new album in 2 years, featuring...

Bloat On ☐ Disco Disco ☐ China Town
Queer Wars ☐ Rainbow Bar & Grill ☐ Dork Radio
17th American Tour ☐ Let's Make A New Dope Deal
Acupuncture ☐ Moe Money

Produced by Cheech & Chong.

See Cheech & Chong's

NEXT MOVIE

COPYRIGHT © 1980 UNIVERSAL CITY STUDIOS INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

now playing
at a theater near you.

On Warner Bros. Records & Tapes.

the bus

SF by Steve Brown

continued from page 5

Heinlein. I had read most of it in my early teens and was curious to see how it felt to an adult mind. Once again I was swept up in his economical prose, the high realism of his most imaginative situations, and the rapid-fire, quip-laden dialogue. Yet in every story there were sown the seeds of the later extravagances. There is a cold viciousness to Heinlein's reactionary philosophy that, were he a politician, would cause me to seriously consider Ronald Reagan as a liberal alternative. There is a scene in *Time Enough for Love* describing a restaurant situated next to a spaceport on a thriving, technologically and socially advanced planet. The owner of the restaurant has a unique method of dealing with thieves. When he catches one, he decapitates the fellow, puts his head on a stake, and erects the stake in front of the restaurant. Thus the sophisticated interstellar tourist must walk past a row of rotting human heads to get a bite to eat.

Once again Heinlein's typewriter has given birth to a monstrosity. *The Number of the Beast* will be published in August with a tremendous fanfare, a deluxe $6.95 quality paperback format, and a wraparound cover by the immutable Richard Powers. I wonder how many purchased copies of the book will actually be read to the last page?

Beginning with *Stranger in a Strange Land*, Heinlein has increasingly narrowed his audience (*Stranger*, paradoxically, is Heinlein's biggest popular success, due to the close parallels between the book's vague sybaritic philosophy and the equally vague sybaritism of American youth in the late sixties). With *Time Enough for Love*, and especially *The Number of the Beast*, he has narrowed his audience down to one—Robert A. Heinlein.

Most of Heinlein's books of the past twenty years have had as protagonists carbon copies of the same character. This person is a ludicrously competent, garrulous old patriarch who rambles incessantly, dispensing pebbles of Heinleinian wisdom, while as an eighteen year old, and surrounded at all times by an entourage of beautiful young women. The Heinlein character reaches absurd dimensions in *The Number of the Beast*. We have four protagonists: Dr. Jacob Burroughs; his wife, Hilda, Zebediah John Carter of Virginia (!); and his wife, Dejah Thoris Burroughs (!), daughter of Dr. Jacob. All four of these people, regardless of age or gender, speak in the same voice, the voice of *Stranger in a Strange Land*'s Jubal Harshaw, of *Time Enough for Love*'s Lazarus Long, etc. The book is organized into first-person chapters from each of the four characters' viewpoints in turn. At first I had to keep referring to the chapter headings to remind myself who was speaking. But it soon became apparent that it didn't make any difference. They are all a seventy-two-year-old Robert Heinlein talking to himself.

Absurdity strikes on the very first page of the book. Zeb has asked Dejah Thoris (Deety for short) for a dance at a fancy party. They are strangers to each other up to this point, and before they have finished that dance, they decide that they know each other well enough to run off and get married. I suppose that if a man ran into a female clone of himself, particularly one of Heinlein's men, love at first sight would be inevitable. Another continuing theme in the book, Heinlein's breast fixation, also pops up on the first page:

> This time I openly stared [down her dress]. "Is that cantilevering natural? Or is there an invisible bra, you being in fact the sole support of two dependents?"
>
> She glanced down, looked up, and grinned. "They do stick out, don't they?"

Were I reading the book for enjoyment, I would have stopped right there and fed it to my trash compactor. However, duty forced me on.

Soon we have a plot. As Zeb, Jacob, Hilda, and Deety exit the party to hunt for a quick double-marriage ceremony somewhere, Jacob's car blows up in the parking lot. Immediately they pile into Zeb's flying automobile and dash off to Jacob's self-sufficient mountain hideaway. In mortal fear of their lives, with the bad guys supposedly hot on their tails, they find it necessary to pause for a legal marriage ceremony. Some conventions are more important than imminent death (is this *really* 1980?).

Dr. Jacob Burroughs has fortuitously invented a gizmo that will shift people and objects into alternative universes, both possible and impossible. The number of alternative universes turns out to be $(6^6)^6$—the Number of the Beast—a huge sum that is approximately 10^{28}.

After a hundred pages of tedious, self-congratulatory conversation, a forest ranger shows up and begins speaking impolitely:

> "You know this uniform. I'm Bernie Hibol, the ranger hereabouts."
>
> I answered most carefully, "Mr. Highball, you are a man in a uniform, wearing a gun belt and a shield. That doesn't make you a federal officer. Show your credentials and state your business."
>
> The uniformed character sighed. "I got no time to listen to smart talk." He rested his hand on the butt of his gun.
>
> Deety suddenly came out from behind me, moved quickly and placed herself beside her father. "Where's your search warrant? Show your authority!"
>
> "Another joker!" He snapped open his holster. "Federal land—here's my author-ity!"
>
> Deety suddenly dropped her cape, stood naked in front of him. I drew, lunged, and cut down in one motion—slashed the wrist, recovered, thrust upward from low line into the belly above the gun belt.

Our happy young married had thoroughly killed him with the swords they happened to be playing with. "Our target collapsed like a puppet with cut strings, lay by the pool, bleeding to death." He was killed because he spoke impolitely, and because he didn't react appropriately when Deety revealed her nude body to him. Though they had had no previous experience with aliens, they all assumed instantly that the ranger couldn't be human. Fortunately this was the case; he bled green blood.

> *"How did you know!"*
>
> "I didn't. But he didn't sound right. Rangers are polite. And they never fuss about showing their IDs."

This is an important incident, because it is the *only* confrontation with the aliens who presumably blew up Jacob's car and are after them all for unspecified purposes. The entire rest of the novel is devoted to our heroes (having proved themselves to be raving psychopaths) running from the aliens. The ranger incident is an example of Heinlein's well-known xenophobia at its farcical peak.

Fear of the aliens spurs our plucky foursome into attaching Dr. Burroughs's conveniently small probability machine to Zeb's conveniently airtight flying Toyota, and off they go to hunt for an alien-free world to live on:

> "Out of a million billion zillion earths, this one may be vermin-free. Highly likely."
>
> "Hilda, my dear, there is no data on which to base *any* assumption."
>
> "Jacob, there is *one* datum."
>
> "Eh? What did I miss, dear?"
>
> "That we *do* know that our native planet *is* infested. So I don't want to raise kids on it. If this isn't the place we're looking for, let's keep looking."
>
> "Mmm, logical."

There are two prerequisites for an appreciation of this book. One, you must have a fascination for navigational mathematics, trigonometry, and symbolic logic. As an old college math major, this was of mild interest to me. Heinlein works out the mechanics of his "continua craft" in fanatical detail, both in the "translation" between universes and in the craft's ability to appear and disappear at will in the sky over a planet like a free-form matter

PAUL KIRCHNER ©

transmitter. But your devotion to math must be deep to appreciate this. Heinlein is clever, and the math is imaginative and accurate, but it goes on and on, taking the reader far beyond tedium into a stunned apathy

The other prerequisite is an appreciation of the nuances of military command. The two married couples zipping around in their tiny auto set themselves up in a rigid and brutal hierarchy that would make Captain Bligh blanch. The interminable arguments about the rights and obligations of captain versus crew occupy a full half of the book's 432 pages. The comic opera aspects of this were mildly amusing at first, but after a few pages it felt like fording a river of shit. Here is an example, regarding the necessity of caution while using a bush on an unknown planet. The captain at the time (they take turns) is Huda, speaking to her husband and daughter-in-law:

"Take the Chief Pilot's rifle and guard the camp—"

"Look, I can do it better with my shotgun."

"Pipe down and carry out your orders."

Deety looked startled, trotted over to Zebbie, who surrendered his rifle without comment, face frozen. "Copilot," I said to my husband, "arm yourself with rifle and pistol, go with the Chief Pilot, guard him while he does what he has to do."

Zebbie swallowed. "Sharpie—I mean *Captain* Sharpie. It won't be necessary The golden moment has passed."

"Chief Pilot, please refrain from using my nickname while I am your commanding officer Copilot, carry out your orders. Remain with the Chief Pilot and guard him continuously *as long as necessary* to accomplish the purpose of the trip."

Once our men were out of earshot, I said, "Deety, could I learn to shoot that rifle?"

"I'm not speaking to you. You humiliated my husband . . . when we all owe him so much."

"Astrogator!"

Deety's eyes got wide. "Good God it's gone to your head!"

"Astrogator."

"Uh . . yes, Captain."

"You will refrain from personal remarks to me or about me during my tenure as commanding officer. Acknowledge that order and log it."

Subtract the math and the childish military diocy, and what's left? A journey through hundreds of increasingly bizarre universes. These could have been interesting, but for another habit of the author's. Ninety-odd percent of this book is flat dialogue between Heinlein and himself (excuse me, between Zeb, Deety, Huda, and Jake). There is very little description of anything. We have scene after scene of the crew sitting in the ship watching a parade of universes roll by. Instead of watching the scenery, we watch the characters This is as frustrating as watching a movie where the camera remains fixed on the characters faces. We see them exclaim in amazement, cringe in fear, laugh, cry; but never do we see what it is they're reacting to.

Two-thirds of the way into the book, we begin falling down the rabbit hole (literally, at one point). Our doughty band of adventurers begins entering fictional universes. They fly over Lilliput; get accosted by Lensmen; have lunch with Glinda the Good Witch and the rest of the cast of Oz; trade logical puzzles with Lewis Carroll; etc., etc. Again, this potentially interesting series is *not* described. We get nothing but reaction shots. By then, I didn't give a damn what the reactions of these anal-retentive, homicidal paranoids were; I just wanted to get the damn thing over with.

There is a welcome piece of humor wherein Heinlein takes a sarcastic shot at himself. The four-way character is discussing with itself what books were childhood favorites of all four, so they can judge what to expect in future interdimensional travels

"Did Heinlein get his name in the hat?"

"Four votes, spit. Two for his 'Future History,' two for *Stranger in a Strange Land*. So I left him out."

"*I* didn't vote for *Stranger* and I'll refrain from embarrassing anyone by asking who did. My God, the things some writers will do for money!"

My cheers were feeble. Compared to the 297 pages I had read to get up to that point, *Stranger in a Strange Land* is one of the great classics of Western literature.

In the last quarter of the book, we (inevitably) end up in the universe of most of Heinlein's own previous fiction, encountering Jubal Harshaw, Lazarus Long, et al. The Heinlein character is hard to take by itself and much harder when there are four of them. But reading lengthy passages of dialogue between close to twenty identical Heinlein characters is a true Reader's Purgatory. They are all preachy individualists; they are all "supergeniuses" with a half-dozen doctorates apiece The book's final hundred pages is an impenetrable jostling crowd of Heinlein characters—all trying to assert their identical rugged independent supergenius wisdom on each other. This sounds like a delicious parody of Heinlein, but it is far too boring to be funny

Now we come to a lengthy passage regarding Lazarus Long's mother. Near the end of *Time Enough for Love*, Long had returned to World War I era Earth (from the far future where he was thousands of years old and randy as a mink, with trillions of descendants). Lazarus not only hunted up his own mother but seduced her before heading off to get killed on a European battlefield Naturally, Heinlein couldn't let one of his pet Heinlein surrogate characters actually die, so Lazarus is scooped up as a bucket of jelly and resurrected. In this book, Lazarus still has a yen for Mom, so he enlists the aid of Zeb, Deety, etc., into returning to the past, picking up Mom just as she is about to be run over by a car and substituting a conveniently handy mindless clone so that the locals will have a body to bury Thus Mom joins Lazarus's harem, and they all live happily ever after in incestuous delight

The book ends at a huge SF convention/party with every person, living or dead, fictional or real, that Heinlein has ever admired in attendance: The First Centennial Convention of the Interuniversal Society for Eschatological Pantheistic Multiple-Ego Solipsism. After Heinlein has mentioned everyone he wants to, from most of Heinlein's own major characters to Sherlock Holmes and most of today's old guard SF authors, the story peters out without a true ending

There is a brief ambiguous encounter with one of the "vermin" on the last page. I had forgotten them by this time, yet they were supposed to have thoroughly "infected" Earth and sent our heroes off on their journey for help and sanctuary As the sole motivation for whatever plot the book has, these aliens play an awfully small role. Who the hell are these guys, and what do they want?

The Number of the Beast would be total gibberish to anyone unfamiliar with Heinlein's work. To those with an encyclopedic knowledge of the man's fiction, it is both a monumental structure built on a foundation of tedium with I beams of pure ennui and an acute embarrassment as an old man gazes so earnestly, and with such relish, into his own fundamental aperture

There will be a certain percentage of buyers of this book who have not read any previous Heinlein. Lest you be turned off by both Heinlein and SF in general, leave it alone. Pause as you reach for a copy on the rack, and let your hand stray instead toward a copy of *The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress*, the last and best of Heinlein's great novels. *The Number of the Beast* is useful only for giving a fine cover artist a plum assignment and as material for Heinlein's psychoanalyst.

The Number of the Beast, by Robert Heinlein, Fawcett, August 1980, $6.95

LIL TINY COMICS #2
©RICK VEITCH
NEW CALCUTTA! THE VERY NAVEL OF THE WORLD...
...TO WHICH, LIKE A BLIND FALTERING IDIOT...
...ONE CRAWLS BACK.
SQUISH!!
THE CITY SPROUTS LIKE A HUGE ORGANISM, ITS BELLY SWOLLEN WITH SEWER GAS...
DISEASED IN EVERY PART...
...THE BEAUTIFUL THOROUGHFARES ONLY A LITTLE LESS GANGRENOUS BECAUSE THEY HAVE BEEN DRAINED OF THEIR PUS.
I AM A CORK THAT HAS DRIFTED TO THE DEAD CENTER OF THE OCEAN, FLOATING HERE IN THE SCUM AND WRACK OF THE SEAS...
LISTLESS...
HEEDLESS.
I UNDERSTAND WHY SCORPIO ATTRACTS THE TORTURED, THE HALLUCINATED, THE GREAT MANIACS OF LOVE.
ONE WALKS THE STREETS KNOWING HE IS MAD -- POSSESSED!
BECAUSE IT IS ONLY TOO OBVIOUS THAT THESE COLD, INDIFFERENT FACES ARE THE VISAGES OF ONE'S KEEPERS...

MUZICK by Lou Stathis

continued from page 4

beauty. Philosophically, the Residents descend from a long line of muzickal eccentrics, names like Stravinsky, Varese, Partch, Stockhausen, and Van Vliet. But Residential muzick is derived from a much broader base than those names would indicate. Clearly evident is input from an infinitely expanded cultural spectrum from Wilson Pickett to Nanook of the North. Reference points abound, but the Residents don't lose themselves in replicatory exhibitionism, vomiting out undigested influences and making the excreta for fresh food, in the manner of recent Zappa or Yes. The Residents are the supreme muzickal synthesists of the moment (have been for ten years) in a time when that process of combining disciplines and aesthetics in search of new muzick is only just being recognized as the vanguard thought of the new era (call it the Eclectic Eighties). This means being avant-garde without being infinitely obtuse or impenetrably unlistenable (an elitist conceit introduced by twentieth-century intellectuals). It also means combining the primitive with the technological, the childish with the sophisticated, the commonplace with the arcane, the bourgeois with the radical, the vegetable with the mineral, the Boogaloo with the Mashed Potato, and any other inane dichotomy you can think of. While no one can accuse the Residents of being transparent (their muzick defies placement into any convenient aural cubbyhole), there is abundant visceral pleasure present if you know how to look and allow yourself to hear it.

This would be a good time for me to get into a little relevant band history, right? Unfortunately, that ain't as easy as it sounds. It seems that the Residents are image-nihilists, in that they don't think their names, faces, or racial-purity quotients have anything to do with what they're about. Their insistence on total anonymity and separation from the public aspects of the muzick biz arises, I suspect, out of an almost neurotic need to stay untouched by the more corrosive elements around them. From this basic denial of image, the Residents have allowed their corporate umbrella (and fallout shelter), the Cryptic Corporation, to twist their protective mask into an absurdist game artfully satirizing the conventional record industry's obsession with visual-symbol manipulation. The hit-making hermits have hid themselves behind head-encasing eyeballs, Klan-like suits made of newspaper, baggy silver radiation garb, huge swastikas and Hitler mustaches, Santa Dog faces, and mummyish clay-bandage body stockings. And as if that isn't bad enough, the Cryptics, in effect, encourage further extensions of the Residents' mystique by their passive nondenial of the wild ravings of hyper-imaginative journalists. Jay Clem, one of the four principals of the Cryptic Corporation, and apparently its primary spokesman, told me with knowing irony in his voice, "You'd be surprised at how close to the truth some of those fictitious stories are." Immediately, I started to sweat. Martians?

Obviously this cavalier attitude with the "truth" makes life difficult for serious scholars and Residential historians like myself. But it also insures that the mythology never stops growing and mutating, which, I gather, is the general idea. The Residents and the Cryptics have put a half-finished canvas on public display accompanied by a box of crayons. The implication that each passer-by should add something to the picture is clear. Sort of shows up the pointlessness of it all and keeps it interesting at the same time. Cheeky bastards. What follows then is what I've come up with while sifting diligently through the apocrypha, the outright fabrications and the subjective truth. Believe what you want.

The Residents, originally five in number, now four (or perhaps not—who knows?) grew up in the Shreveport area of northwest Louisiana. They met in high school, gravitated together as fellow outcasts, and later migrated separately to San Francisco in 1967 (Clem. "At least some of them were here for the 'Summer of Love.'"). Once there, amidst the rapidly decaying hippie subculture, they closeted themselves with recording equipment and their unorthodox array of instruments to begin years of intensive playing. Their earliest recordings date from 1970, when they assembled and packaged (but didn't release) a group of forty-minute reel-to-reel tapes: *Rusty Coat Hangers for the Doctor* (July 1970), *The Ballad of Stuffed Trigger* (August 1970), *The Warner Bros. Album* (May 1971, a demo sent to Warner in search of a contract), and *Baby Sex* (November 1971). The tape sent to Hal Halverstadt at Warner (without giving any name, just a return address) resulted, so the story goes, in the band naming itself after the addressee of the reply.

Appearing on the scene at this time were Philip Lithman and N. Senada, two individuals who would later have an enormous influence on the rascally rocking recluses (and vice versa as well, in Lithman's case). Lithman was an eccentric British guitarist who came to the Bay Area looking for the action accompanied by his friend, a Bavarian musicologist. Somehow, they found the Residents (who were less low-profile those days), and Lithman became Snakefinger (renamed by a Resident due to the rubbery dexterity of his paws) and a regular Resident collaborator. N. Senada (whose existence I don't quite accept—the root of his name is the Spanish word for "learn") was valuable in introducing the Residents to Eskimo muzick as well as to some obscure theories of composition. After a year or so in the area Senada went off to the North country and Lithman returned to England, where he formed Chuji Willi and the Red Hot Peppers (a deranged pub-rok band who recorded two LPs, and whose manager, Andrew Jakeman, aka Jake Riviera, later formed Stiff Records and discovered Elvis Costello). Also making his departure at this time was the fifth Resident, who apparently had some trouble dealing with the pressures he and the band were facing.

Now a quartet, the Residents formed their own record company, Ralph, and released a double single, "Santa Dog," for Christmas in 1972. Three hundred of the things were mailed out with hardly any reaction recorded from anyone. Today it is the rarest of all Residents vinyl items. The first album followed in February 1974. It was called *Meet the Residents*, and it sported a cover composed of the maliciously altered faces of another famous fab foursome. The currently available version (Ralph RR 0677) has a revised cover—the Beatles as crustaceans replacing the original defaced *Meet the Beatles* cover—and a new stereo mix. By the standards set in their later offerings, *Meet* is crudely recorded. It sounds claustrophobic, the dynamic range of the sound abbreviated noticeably. Consequently, I find it the most difficult Residents album to listen to and enjoy—I keep being distracted by the sound quality. But it is remarkable, nonetheless, especially when one considers what else was happening in 1974. It opens with Nancy Sinatra's feminist classic "These Boots Are Made for Walking," done by the cast of an elementary-school talent show or the Portsmouth Sinfonia on an off day. It then segues into a section of stuttering toy piano, a bit of greasy saxophone sliding through a repetitive figure, and vocals sung

through stuffed noses. From there stretches an ever surprising array of bizarre juxtapositions: the tacky lewdness of "Smelly Tongues" (later made even *lewder* by Snakefinger on his first single), followed by the aqueous gamelanlike primitivism of "Rest Area" and the Christmas caroling chorus of "Spotted Pinto Bean." This is strange, strange stuff but beautifully played, daringly arranged, and plain hilarious in its exhilarating irreverence.

Third Reich'n Roll was released on February 1, 1976. The time between the two albums was spent working on the Residents' videofilm *Vileness Fats* (begun 1971, abandoned 1975) and recording the album *Not Available* (which wasn't until two and a half years later). *Third* is perhaps the best known Residents record and notorious for its bludgeon and-chainsaw attack on more than two dozen Top 40 hits of the sixties. But this is not mere crash and-burn muzickal terrorism, it is more the Residents' *Reuben & The Jets*—both a tribute and repudiation. It is a carefully thought out, meticulously produced work, ever yielding of new ideas and relationships; a staggering whole weaved from impossibly diverse materials. It is as though the Residents achieved, through savage pummeling and the techniques of torture, the essence of each of these songs and then constructed new ones with the recognizable, though distorted, ingredients of the originals. They've surfaced the inherent tribalism contained in "Land of a Thousand Dances," the industrial throbbing of "Pushin' Too Hard," the helium fed attack of "Wipe-Out," and the hauntingly discordant interpolation of "Inna Gadda Da Vida" with "Hey Jude" and "Sympathy for the Devil." The album is also notable for its cover: Dick Clark as smiling cultural *Oberstfuhrer*. The Residents have been informed that Clark is amused by the characterization and displays the album cover prominently in his office.

In the same spirit is the Residents' single "Satisfaction" (currently available as Ralph RR 7803), released six months later. It is an exuberantly obnoxious piece of (yellow) vinyl that must be heard to be believed (and heard *loud*). It is excellent for emptying rooms and scaring neighbors and should be required listening for anyone who claims that Mick Jagger still has what it takes.

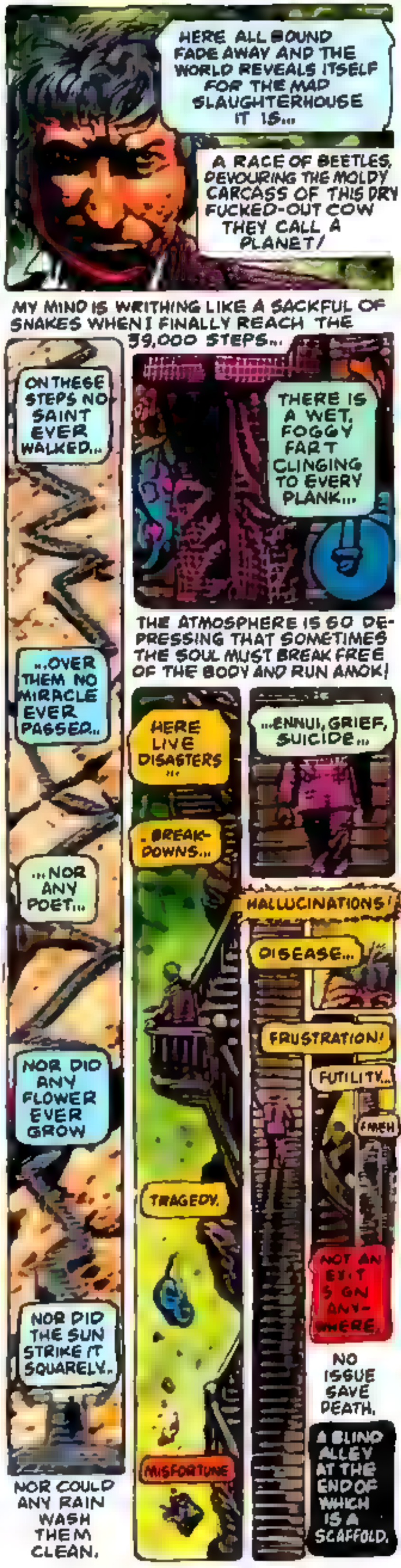
Appearing on the Residential horizon at this time were the four principals, who would become the Cryptic Corporation: Homer Flynn, Hardy Fox, John Kennedy, and Jay Clem. These guys hailed from the same neck of the bayou as the humorous tunesmiths and had migrated independently to Rice-A-Rom land at the same time. There was an indirect connection (Clem: 'Homer's sister went to school with a Resident"), and the eight hooked up in late 1976 in a symbiotic, though not always smooth, relationship. The Cryptics became the legal guardians of the Residents' muzick, handling their business affairs and acting as their communications link with the outside world. Their backgrounds are varied and complementary to each other: Flynn's is in the graphic arts, Clem's in business, Kennedy's in video, and Fox's in band management.

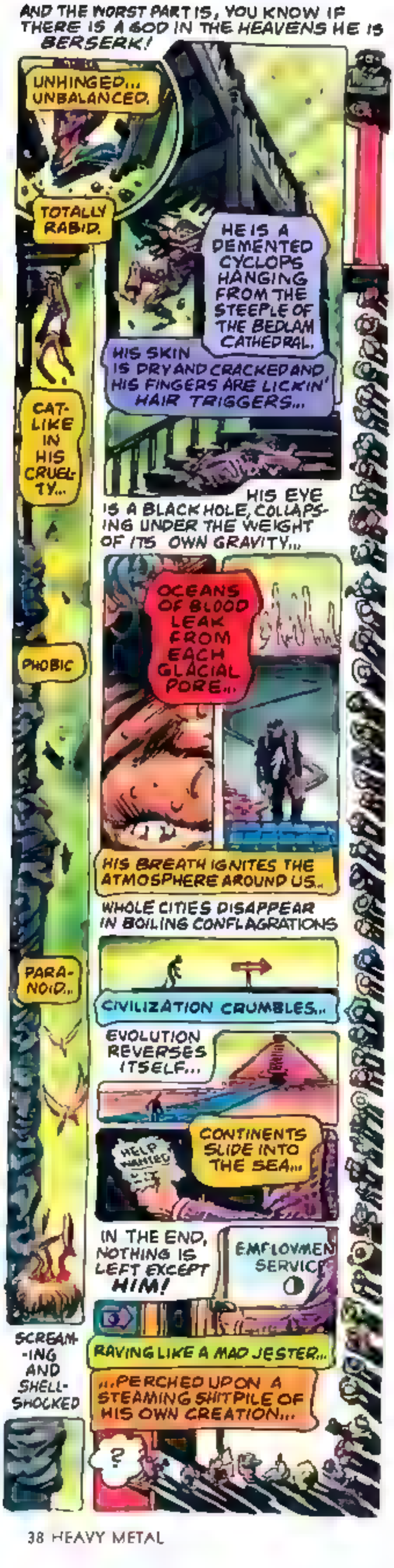
Fingerprince (Ralph RR 1276) was the first release under the Cryptics' aegis in February 1977. I find this the least inspired of the band's albums. Something vital is missing—a spark of imagination or urgency of new ideas that fired the other albums. It was also the first Residents album I heard, and (naturally) I hated it. It took me two years to figure out what these crazies were doing. Unquestionably better were *Duck Stab/Buster & Glen* (Ralph RR 0278) and *Not Available* (RR 1174). *Not*, as mentioned earlier, was recorded between *Meet the Residents* and *Third Reich'n Roll* and shelved until such time as the Residents forgot it existed (whereupon it would be released). This opportunity arose in October 1978, when the promised *Eskimo* didn't materialize. The album is musickally graceful and fluid, the most coherent long statement the band would make until *Eskimo*. It is extremely cinematic, in narrative style with expository sections, flashbacks and flashforwards, scene changes, and elapsed time—all implied with muzick. I've yet to figure out the story line, though. *Duck Stab* first saw release as an EP in February 1978 (recorded as a break in the endless *Eskimo* project) and nine months later became side one of the LP with *Buster & Glen* occupying side two. *Duck/Buster* is the Residents' rok and roll album. The songs are bite sized and easily digestible (this is the most accessible Residents album, and probably the one to start with). The rhythms are almost conventional, the lyrics understandable and practically comprehensible as well, and this is as manic as the boys ever get.

Eskimo is the Residents' masterpiece. It was released in November 1979 (Ralph ESK 7906) and pressed on snazzy white vinyl. Supposedly, this record is the Residents' reconstruction/interpretation of Eskimo muzick with its primitive chant grunts, repetitive riffs from a five-note scale played on walrus-bone and seal-gut instruments, etc. For all I know it might be real igloo hootchie-koo, but when I can hear stuff like kid-game dog barking, chants that seem to be barely disguised English ("Money, money, money, money, Get some sauce!"), and other deadpanned foolishness, I begin to have my doubts. But it's great stuff, nonetheless, as good as any National Geographic TV special and lots more tuneful to boot. The more recent "Diskomo" release (Ralph RZ 8006 D) indicates that the Residents themselves appreciate the ridiculousness of the undertaking. This twelve inch single is eight minutes of marvelously primitive midnight sun dancing muzick (backed with the more traditional Residents fare of kiddie songs rendered on toy instruments). The marriage of Eskimo pentatonic minimalism with a disco beat is brilliant—the two seem made for each other. It's also hilarious (especially the group shout "We want coke, oh yeah!" in Eskimo voice), and damn good dancing material. It has an irresistible idiot energy and an exhilarating monotony—the two prime ingredients for good disco. These guys never cease to surprise me.

Two big things await us in the near future, the next Residents album and the Residents world tour (no jive). The Cryptics tell us that the next LP from the boys will be released in the fall of this year and will be a concept album. The concept? A commercial album, containing forty songs, each of exactly sixty seconds, duration. Jay Clem said that it reminded him of *Duck Stab* most of all. Should be hot. Planned for 1982, at this point, is the Residents, first and only world tour (a Resident told Clem. "Life's too short not to."). It will consist of one show in each of seven cities, tentatively Los Angeles, New York, London, Paris, Amsterdam, Munich, and Tokyo (San Francisco, as home turf, will get some sort of special consideration). Plans are no more concrete than that now, but you can be assured that it will be an event of millennial proportions. Line up now, boys and girls. What more can I say?

[The Residents records mentioned above—as well as a couple not mentioned but worth purchasing, like *Subterranean Modern* (Ralph SM 7908), a sampler containing muzick by the happy harmonizers as well as by Tuxedomoon, Chrome, and MX 80 Sound—can be obtained directly from Ralph Records at 444 Grove Street, San Francisco, CA 94102, or from Jem Distributors, PO Box 362, South Plainfield, NJ 07080. If your local discery doesn't stock them, bug 'em until they do']


HERE ALL SOUND FADE AWAY AND THE WORLD REVEALS ITSELF FOR THE MAD SLAUGHTERHOUSE IT IS...
A RACE OF BEETLES, DEVOURING THE MOLDY CARCASS OF THIS DRY FUCKED-OUT COW THEY CALL A PLANET/
MY MIND IS WRITHING LIKE A SACKFUL OF SNAKES WHEN I FINALLY REACH THE 39,000 STEPS...
ON THESE STEPS NO SAINT EVER WALKED...
...OVER THEM NO MIRACLE EVER PASSED...
...NOR ANY POET...
NOR DID ANY FLOWER EVER GROW
NOR DID THE SUN STRIKE IT SQUARELY...
NOR COULD ANY RAIN WASH THEM CLEAN.
THERE IS A WET, FOGGY FART CLINGING TO EVERY PLANK...
THE ATMOSPHERE IS SO DEPRESSING THAT SOMETIMES THE SOUL MUST BREAK FREE OF THE BODY AND RUN AMOK!
HERE LIVE DISASTERS...
...BREAK-DOWNS...
TRAGEDY.
MISFORTUNE
...ENNUI, GRIEF, SUICIDE...
HALLUCINATIONS!
DISEASE...
FRUSTRATION!
FUTILITY...
FINISH
NOT AN EXIT SIGN ANY-WHERE.
NO ISSUE SAVE DEATH.
A BLIND ALLEY AT THE END OF WHICH IS A SCAFFOLD.


AND THE WORST PART IS, YOU KNOW IF THERE IS A GOD IN THE HEAVENS HE IS BERSERK!
UNHINGED... UNBALANCED.
TOTALLY RABID.
HE IS A DEMENTED CYCLOPS HANGING FROM THE STEEPLE OF THE BEDLAM CATHEDRAL.
HIS SKIN IS DRY AND CRACKED AND HIS FINGERS ARE LICKIN' HAIR TRIGGERS...
CAT-LIKE IN HIS CRUELTY...
HIS EYE IS A BLACK HOLE, COLLAPSING UNDER THE WEIGHT OF ITS OWN GRAVITY...
PHOBIC
OCEANS OF BLOOD LEAK FROM EACH GLACIAL PORE...
HIS BREATH IGNITES THE ATMOSPHERE AROUND US...
WHOLE CITIES DISAPPEAR IN BOILING CONFLAGRATIONS
PARA-NOID...
CIVILIZATION CRUMBLES...
EVOLUTION REVERSES ITSELF...
CONTINENTS SLIDE INTO THE SEA...
HELP WANTED
IN THE END, NOTHING IS LEFT EXCEPT HIM!
EMPLOYMENT SERVICE
SCREAM-ING AND SHELL-SHOCKED
RAVING LIKE A MAD JESTER...
"...PERCHED UPON A STEAMING SHITPILE OF HIS OWN CREATION...
?

COMIX by Jay Kinney

continued from page 4

Thus was just one trend among several, of course. Another kind of UG, comix relying on parody, was superficially similar to this but different in at least one important respect. They exaggerated the characteristics of their inspirational targets, not to emulate or extend them but to criticize and ridicule them. The two main parodies worth glancing at here are *Young Lust* and the work of the Air Pirates.

Young Lust, launched by Bill Griffith and myself, began from a simple premise—that girls' romance comics, those corny and paternalistic purveyors of "love" and fantasy to millions of young, impressionable minds, were sitting ducks for satire. With real-life fifteen year olds taking the pill one moment and acid the next, the love comics were hopelessly out of synch—prim puritans from another era teaching all the wrong lessons.

By early 1970, Bill and I had already done strips mocking the love comics. Mine, called "A Thing Unknown," had appeared in *Bijou Funnies* #3 in late 1969, while Bill's "They Called Our Love Pornographic, But We Don't Care!" was as yet unpublished. In discussing possible projects together we hit on doing a whole book devoted to parodying love comics. The idea seemed like such a natural, and we plowed right ahead, leaving details such as who would publish the comic, now called *Young Lust*, until later.

When work on the comic began in April, 1970, we were living in New York, in close touch with Justin Green in New Jersey, who was also slated to do a story for #1. By mid July, both Bill and Justin had left New York for San Francisco and the UG community there. Soon after, Justin dropped out of *Young Lust* #1, his pages replaced with a story by Bill and a one-pager by Art Spiegelman, another New York cartoonist now in San Francisco. The issue was completed in August, and the task of finding a publisher could no longer be postponed.

Much to Griffith's chagrin, this proved easier said than done. Rip Off liked the book but deemed it too "bustable." It wasn't "progressive" enough for Last Gasp, while the Print Mint thought the premise worthy of a single story in, say, *Yellow Dog*, but too thin for a whole comic book.

Discouraged, Bill turned to the ever-resourceful Gary Arlington for advice. Gary suggested he try one more place, a new UG publisher on the scene, Company & Sons. They'd already published three comix by new cartoonists (*Buzzard*, by Winks; *Honky Tonk*, by Dave Geiser; and *Hee Hee*, an undistinguished anthology comic edited by Gary himself), so perhaps they'd be game. They were, indeed, and after a couple of months of excruciating delays, *YL* #1 came out in late October.

It was not a particularly sophisticated parody; some of the jokes, in fact, relied on an enthusiastic bluntness of the sort that would make Larry Flynt a millionaire only a few years later. But unlike many UGs, it found as large an audience with women as with men. The first edition quickly sold out and Company & Sons had to struggle to meet the demand for more copies from its distribution channels.

By the summer of 1971, *YL* #1 had sold over fifty thousand copies and was still going strong, but like most hippie businesses, Company & Sons was continually poised on the edge of bankruptcy. Juggling comics, job printing, and an ever changing roster of co-workers, John Bagley managed to keep the firm afloat but was ill-equipped to publish *YL* #2.

Young Lust #2, with forty pages and seven cartoonists, went to the Print Mint. With each new issue during the decade, *Young Lust* left strict parody farther and farther behind, with the romance format becoming merely a peg on which to hang stories of varied social satire. As you read this, a new issue, #6, should be due out soon, from Last Gasp.

When this history resumes, I'll discuss the ill-fated Air Pirates and their battle over parody with Walt Disney.

New Publications

Department of Pleasant Surprises: From out of the wilds of the Pioneer Valley region of Massachusetts comes *Scat*, a free, monthly comic magazine with a circulation twice that of most UGs (twenty thousand). Concocted by a collective of local cartoonists and supported by ad space sold to area businesses, *Scat* has two editions, no less, one "college" and one "community."

The humor is rated PG, due to *Scat*'s free distribution system, but that doesn't stop some good jokes from being cracked anyway. An average issue will have strips by eight or so artists, ranging from the Bill Hoest-like whimsy of Don Brunelle, to the neobarbarian epics of Gary Johnson or Peter Laird. My personal preference so far is the work of John Hayman—somewhat crude but delightfully idiotic.

Scat is a great example of artists' banding together to get their work out before the public. There should be a *Scat* in every city across the country! Admittedly, some of the art is awkward, but print is the best classroom, and a showcase like this is an unbeatable opportunity for beginning artists.

Subscriptions are available for those who don't live in the area, for five dollars a year (ten issues) from *Scat*, PO Box 326, Northampton, MA 01060.

Bizarro comic of the month: *Neurocomics*, a comic book outline of Tim Leary's latest theories, has just been published by Last Gasp. It took Los Angeles writer George Dicapno and artist Pete Von Sholly three years of collaboration with Leary to come up with this baby, and it is certainly one of the strangest comics to come down the pike in a long while.

Briefly, the comic illustrates (with ultra-decorative diagrams and pictures) Leary's brain-centered notions about higher intelligence and space migration. If you like jargon, you'll love this one. (Mild sample: "Unencumbered by the limitations of somatic, or larval-survival imprints, the brain is an extraterrestrial organ, an *alien* intelligence."). With brains as aliens and bodies as robots, all following orders from the good old DNA, you may wonder where *you* come in. Well, that knotty question is answered in *Neurocomics* somewhere, and what isn't covered can be found in the veritable torrent of books flowing from Leary's pen, which are advertised therein as well.

But seriously, Mom, this is a rather charming comic, with some striking (and funny) art throughout. Its crackpot qualities are fully in the grand comic book tradition (Tim Leary as Charles Atlas?) and if you can make it through the jargon, the ideas are pure SF. ($1.50 postpaid from Last Gasp, 2180 Bryant, San Francisco, CA 94110.)

Meanwhile, the **Church of the SubGenius** in Dallas, Texas, has concocted a religion that puts even Leary to shame. As explained in their engrossing "Pamphlet No. 1," a sixteen page tour de force of mumbo jumbo and clip art, "The Church of the SubGenius is the ultimate secret order, the superior brain cult for those who 'know better' but who demand in their *lust* for *gnus* a spectacular, special-effects-laden belief system —a 'stuporstition.'" *That* the Church provides in spades.

She stood like a ghostly Druid sacrifice surrounded by a ring of silent Cannibals...
I jumped through the window and ran.
Run! I'll hold them off for you!
©1980 Rod Kierkegaard, Jr.
You idiot! I'm not running away from them--
Adolpho's my boyfriend --that's why my father tried to shoot him.

Based on revelations from High Epopt and supersalesman J.R. "Bob" Dobbs, this "Spazz-Church of Macho Irony" lives by the motto "Fuck Them If They Can't Take a Joke." Need I say more? It's not exactly "comix," but it sure is Underground. ($1.50 for the pamphlet and related flyers. From the SubGenius Foundation, PO Box 140306, Dallas, TX 75214.)

A batch of new releases worthy of comment from Kitchen Sink has just arrived.

I'll admit up front that Howard Cruse's *Barefootz Funnies* has never been one of my favorites. His characters, be they roaches, frogs, Headrack the gay hippie painter, the ever-horny Dolly, or Barefootz himself, have all seemed to suffer from a case of the terminal cutes. Cruse's style is impeccably stippled and easy to read, but somehow those googly eyes have always seemed more appropriate for the syndicated dailies than the Underground.

The new ***Barefootz*** #3 ($1.50 postpaid), however, is a striking departure from past *Barefootz* productions in more ways than one. Most impressive are Cruse's meditations on his characters' own cuteness. In "Variations" he takes them through a series of demotions, renders them in every "untypical" way imaginable, and lampoons various critics' gripes. Similarly, the blood 'n' guts back cover breaks rank by twisting Barefootz and Dolly into psychopathic fiends. And peppered here and there throughout the rest of the book are moments of stylistic complexity that leap above the somewhat placid norm, driving home the self-imposed limitations of the Barefootz universe. At such moments Cruse is his own best critic, and if he follows up on some of the different approaches he merely toys with here, there should be no stopping him.

'50s Funnies ($1.50 postpaid), edited by Larry Shell, sports a beautiful Bill Stout cover, which alone is almost worth the price of admission. Luckily, the strips inside all hold up. With parodies of "Hot Stuff" (the Li'l Devil) by Shell and Shaw, and "Pud" and the Fleer gum kids, by Kelly/Veitch, *'50s Funnies* comes off as a warped product of that era itself, rather than just another dutiful exercise in nostalgia. George Erling has two losers—the ninety-eight-pound weakling and the dropout—battling over Bettysue in amusing fashion. Will Meugniot, last seen in *Dr. Wirtham's* #2 as I recall, turns in a neo-EC gang-fight tale—his best yet. And there's more, by Bissette, Hunt, Alcala, and others. Though dedicated to the memory of Elvis, *'50s Funnies'* most recurring ghost is psycho Ed Gein, whose revolting presence assures the book a high gross-out quotient. The fainthearted beware!

Also new from Kitchen: ***Bizarre Sex*** #8 ($1.50 postpaid) and ***The Spirit*** #23 ($2.00 postpaid). The former is a mixed bag of laughs and groans, with the emphasis this time around on the outre. The latter is indispensable for fans of Will Eisner, containing not only five vintage *Spirit* strips but also a hefty sixteen-page chapter of Eisner's all-new graphic novel, *Life of Another Planet. The Spirit* is quarterly and with the recent addition of Eisner buff Cat Yronwode to the staff has added features like an ongoing exhaustive *Spirit* checklist. (Kitchen Sink Enterprises, Box 7, Princeton, WI 54968.) You must be eighteen or over to order all of the above comix, except for *The Spirit*.

Finally, from Jay Lynch in Chicago comes this oddball offer to all UG fans who want some bargain original art: Send Lynch a five dollar check and he will endorse it with a signed drawing of Pat the Cat. When the check returns through normal bank channels, presto! You have a Lynch original suitable for framing. Lynch's address is: PO Box 3506, Merchandise Mart Station, Chicago, IL 60654.

COMIX INT'L

by Maurice Horn

continued from page 5

created *Tintin*, his most celebrated feature, in the weekly supplement to the Brussels daily *Le Vingtieme Siecle*. Thus, Herge's career started as an offshoot of the well established and highly developed French comic strip; it was soon to take on, however, a flavor and a look all its own.

Tintin in Light and Shadow

Since 1926 Hergé has been laboring in a discreet mode (in relative isolation) that not even his late-blooming fame has been able to shake completely. His output, while not tremendous by American standards, has been steady, imaginative, and, most of all, significant. His world-famous creation, *Tintin*, has been appearing since 1929 in comic strips, reprinted in book form since 1930. There are now twenty-three of the books, from the 1930 *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets*, in which the draftsmanship is so poor, and the anti-Sovietism so crude, that Herge refused to let it be reprinted (until he was practically forced into it by the proliferation of pirate versions that kept appearing over the years) to the 1976 *Tintin and the Picaros* (where a rehash of all of Herge's familiar themes gets a slick but superficial Hollywood-style treatment). It seems unlikely that Herge will conjure up something startlingly new or significant in coming years; therefore, some sort of critical assessment should be possible now.

Hergé was born Georges Remi in Belgium in 1907 (his pen name is the phonetic rendering, in French, of the two initials of his name, R G.) and was raised in les Marolles, a working-class neighborhood of Brussels, whose colorful dialect was later to find its way to Herge's writings. His life has been rather uneventful and quiet (except for a brush with the authorities in 1945, for alleged collaboration with the Germans during the war, a charge that was later cleared). His life story is mainly represented by his body of work. (Hergé has drawn other comic strips besides *Tintin*. They are *Quick and Flupke*, a gag strip about two Brussels street urchins; the juvenile adventures of *Jo, Zette et Jocko*; and a satirical animal strip in book form, *Popol and Virginie in the Land of the Lapmos*. They all pale in comparison with *Tintin*.)

As with all original creations, Tintin's is a self-contained, coherent fantasy world. The hero is a teenager (by all appearances) and a reporter In the conventions of the time this means his doing everything, from detective work to space exploration, all assignments that Tintin carries out with characteristic aplomb and suitable humility. In his adventures he is always flanked by his faithful fox terrier Milou (Snowy in the English version), who, long before Snoopy came along, was one dog who let no human put one over on him. At first Snowy shared top billing with Tintin, but in more recent years his role has become more and more discreet, as other characters have appeared. Of these characters Captain Haddock has been the most visible. A former alcoholic sailor, he was rescued by Tintin and is now repaying his debt by upstaging his erstwhile savior at the slightest opportunity with boisterous shenanigans and truculent language. His ideal foils are the twin plainclothesmen Dupont and Dupond (Thompson and Thomson in English), who, in response to the barbs and affronts of the irascible sailor, have reacted with consistent muddleheadedness, misdirected stoicism, and blank incomprehension. These are the performing stars, but there are many others. Tournesol (Calculus), the absent minded (and deaf to boot) professor; the overbearing opera singer Bianca Castafiore; the incurable conspirator Alcazar; the evil genius Rastapopoulos; the infamous Dr. Muller; and a supporting cast of thousands form an ever-changing, ever engaging gallery through which our hero effortlessly moves.

The *Tintin* books can be read and enjoyed independently from one another, but a knowledge

I was incredulous.
Who could love you? You're nothing but a cartoon character with that stupid mask.
Look, I'm sorry if I've hurt you--you just aren't a real person to me. You haven't got any self-respect.
But I thought you loved me!

Angel, take this guy into the dump and shoot him.
Hey, wait a minute!
While they argued, Angel, as black and menacing as an insect, prodded me across the garbage.

Listen,me killing you has got nothing to do with personalities--it's strictly meta-physical.
It might seem cruel to you,but I'm acting out of a sort of Zen sense of purity.
That's great.
I don't even have a physical body--we're all just armored shells--
--animated by a will to power. This spot looks good.
I was saved by the Second Sister,who appeared behind us with a shotgun.
Don't move, or I'll blow your head off.

of their chronological order might be helpful at this point; each title will also serve as a guidepost along Hergé's long and prolific career. In putting these adventures in their proper sequence (all the more indispensable since English and American publishers have been releasing the *Tintin* books in random order) I won't try to retrace the often complicated plots, but I'll attempt to give the flavor of each album.

In terms of artistry and inspiration Herge's work can be neatly divided into three parts. The first (or early) period coincides almost perfectly with the pre-World War II era (roughly from 1929 to 1939). We must bear in mind that Herge's work of that time was done exclusively in black and white and was later extensively redrawn to fit the specifications of book format and color use. Immediately following *Land of the Soviets* (and in contrast to it), *Tintin in the Congo* paints an idyllic picture of Belgium's administration of its former colony. In the light of subsequent historical events all the self-congratulation now seems a bit out of place (to put it mildly). Rounding up this series of fanciful travelogues, Hergé then came up with *Tintin in America*, an America overrun by gangsters, riddled with corruption, and bedeviled by racism and Prohibition (this was 1931). Things improve noticeably with the appearance of the unspeakable Rastapopoulos and the inept Thom(p)sons (initially called X-33 and X-33 bis) in the next adventure, *Cigars of the Pharaoh*. From then on Hergé would steadily improve and hone his storytelling skills.

The Blue Lotus (1936) is an important milestone along the way: wherein Herge denounces Japan's aggression against China and derisively pillories the inaction and cravenness of the Western democracies --a remarkable statement at the time. Herge's remaining works of the decade can be traced in a steadily rising parabola. *The Broken Ear* brings us General Alcazar and the machinations of money-mad, power-hungry plutocrats. *The Black Island* involves Tintin (and Snowy) with a bunch of counterfeiters, the sinister Muller, and a friendly ape in the midst of Scotland. *King Ottokar's Scepter* is a cautionary tale in the shadow of the coming world war. Significantly enough, the villain of the piece was initially named Musstler, an amalgam of Mussolini and Hitler, but was changed to Muskov in the book version.

Herge's middle period spans the two decades of the forties and fifties and is his most inspired and fecund stage. It starts with a bang with the introduction of the inebriated Captain Haddock in *The Crab with the Golden Claws* and, after the pleasant interlude of *The Shooting Star*, escalates into the wild mischief and mayhem of *The Secret of the Unicorn*. This is followed by the quieter, almost contemplative episode of *Red Rackham's Treasure*. In this series of dazzling tales the Thom(p)sons, Haddock, and Calculus (who makes his entrance as a stowaway aboard our hero's ship) achieve co-star status alongside Tintin. The mystery of *The Seven Crystal Balls* and its sequel, *Prisoners of the Sun*, round up Herge's most fabulous decade.

Started in 1939 and completed in 1951, *The Land of Black Gold* is a hilarious foray into the crazy politics of oil and the Middle East. Following that is *Destination Moon* and its sequel, *Explorers on the Moon*. These, Herge's only true science fiction tales, have been outdated by the American moon shots but are still enjoyable in their very quaintness (in structure they are consciously modeled on Jules Verne's two-volume moon odyssey). The subsequent story, *The Calculus Affair*, is one of Tintin's best adventures, full of suspense, action, and mystery. *The Red Sea Sharks*, while weak, is still highly entertaining.

The last two decades have been characterized by a correlated loss of inspiration and fecundity. For instance, years separate *Flight 714* from *Tintin and the Picaros*, and there have been four *Tintin* stories, all told, in this entire period. They are, in fast order, *Tintin in Tibet* (looking for the Abominable Snowman), *The Castafiore Emerald* (an agreeable comedy of manners), *Flight 714*

(Rastapopoulos up to his old tricks again), and *Tintin and the Picaros* (Alcazar up to his old tricks again).

As we can see, Tintin's domain is the whole planet (and even outer space), and in his adventures he has ranged as far as Antarctica (*The Shooting Star*), Peru (*Prisoners of the Sun*), and the South Seas (*Red Rackham's Treasure*). But Tintin's favorite place remains the mythical kingdom of Syldavia, where Herge is all the more at ease (since he created it himself), from its unpronounceable proper names down to the uniforms of the palace guards. *Tintin*'s themes remain as simple in formulation as they are sophisticated in treatment. a call to duty, a wrong to be righted, a friend to be rescued, or mankind to be saved. These are the eternal themes of adventure from the *Odyssey* to the present, and in the variations upon them Herge has few peers.

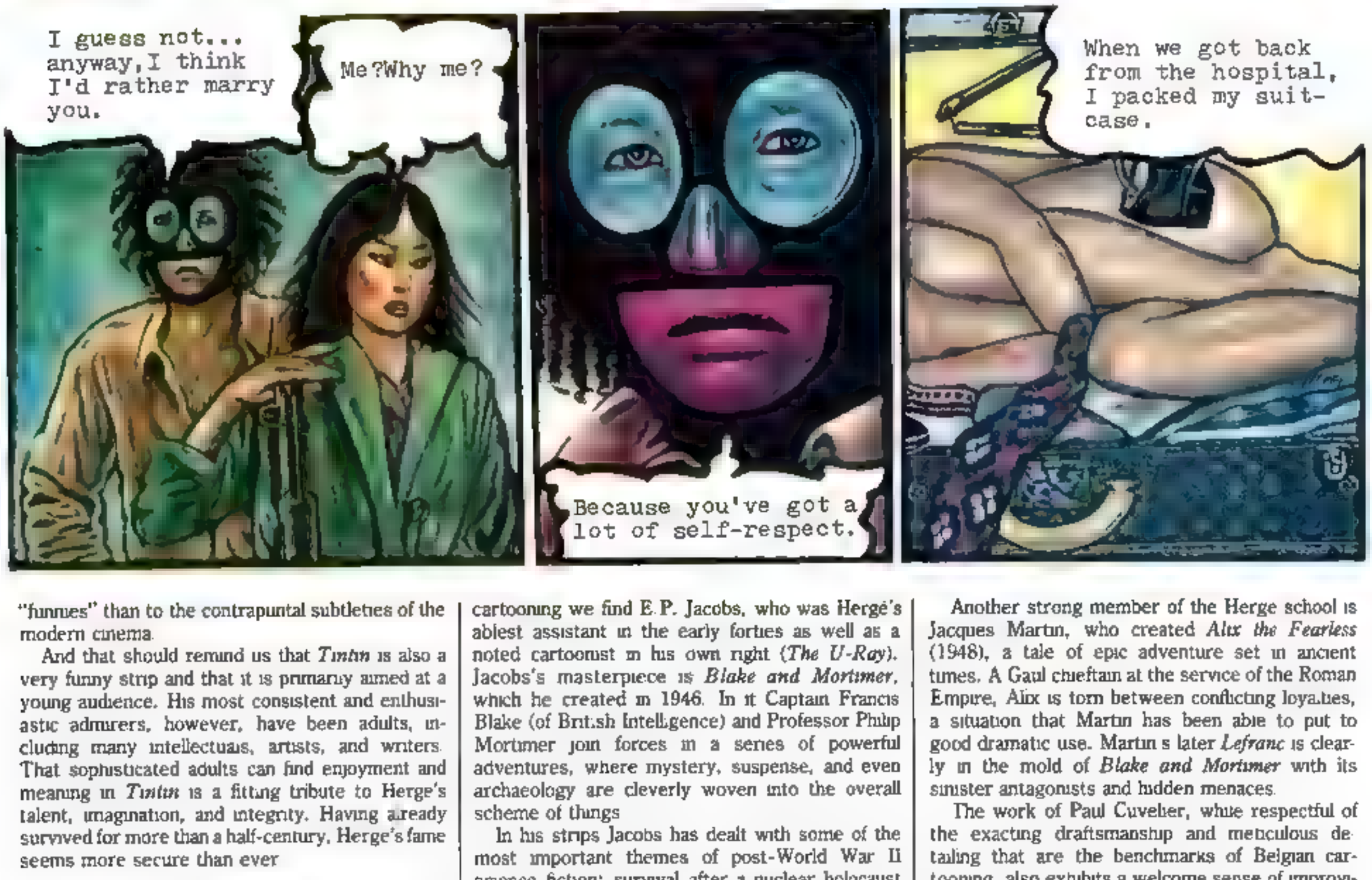
Hergé's draftsmanship, so easily underrated, is a major factor in *Tintin*'s success. It is subordinate to the story, but very skilful in its unobtrusiveness. Even the characters, drawn in a conventional "cartoony" style, do not detract from the integrity of the action, a fact that is often overlooked when judging Herge's artwork (artwork that can be characterized more by what Hergé leaves out than by what he puts in).

At first, Hergé's draftsmanship was crude and derivative, and did not come into its own until 1936. In this respect Herge's career makes a striking parallel to Milton Caniff's. Both men were born the same year, started on a cartooning career around the same period, and mastered their own inimitable styles at about the same time. That Caniff's work in the thirties came to Herge's attention is undeniable. In *The Blue Lotus* (which characteristically takes place in China) Herge makes conscious use of the very techniques that Caniff is noted for: the contrast between solid black and white masses, the dramatic effects of massive silhouettes against a light, half-distinct background, the fluid, cameralike action. But this remains untypical of Hergé's work and represents not so much an attempt at adapting Caniff's particular narrative style as an homage paid by one master to another

Hergé's graphics are characterized by their clear, limpid style. All masses are clearly delineated in definite, hard-edged contours. There is no rupture between the backgrounds and the characters in the foreground; they are all integrated in one all-encompassing composition. *Tintin*'s pages constitute a harmonious whole, made of symmetry, balance, and simplicity.

The single most important influence working on Hergé is to be found not in the comics (where Hergé acknowledges Benjamin Rabier and George McManus among his masters, in addition to Saint-Ogan) but in the movies. In the technical handling of his often complex stories, in the skillful rendering of mood and building of suspense, in his uncanny sense of timing, Herge resembles no one so much as Alfred Hitchcock. Just as in Hitchcock's films, innocent objects take on dark meanings, unsuspecting characters wander in and out of the plot unaware of sinister events, and, under the veneer of suspense, like a play within a play, a delightful comedy of manners unfolds. As with Hitchcock the action is punctuated by the fateful reappearance of objects as visual correlatives (the scepter in *King Ottokar's Scepter*, the scale-model ship in *The Secret of the Unicorn*, the can of crab meat in *The Crab with the Golden Claws*, the exotic pack of cigarettes in *The Calculus Affair*; one could go on and on). It is not that Hergé strives to copy Hitchcock's chilly, and slightly paranoid, parables; he simply relishes the master's techniques of storytelling, and the nuance is nowhere as obvious as in *Tintin*'s endings. While Hitchcock provides at the close of his films an anticlimax to real or fancied terrors, Hergé ends with a bang rather than a whimper. Each of Tintin's adventures concludes either in slapstick or with a full-page panel teeming with the ludicrous carryings-on of his characters, a proclivity that owes more to the crude humor of the early

Aren't you going to help me find my sister?
I don't think she wants to come back.
Well, I'm not going to be the sister-in-law of a motorcycle gang.
Besides, I thought you two were going to get married.


I guess not... anyway, I think I'd rather marry you.
Me? Why me?
Because you've got a lot of self-respect.
When we got back from the hospital, I packed my suitcase.

"funnies" than to the contrapuntal subtleties of the modern cinema.

And that should remind us that *Tintin* is also a very funny strip and that it is primarily aimed at a young audience. His most consistent and enthusiastic admirers, however, have been adults, including many intellectuals, artists, and writers. That sophisticated adults can find enjoyment and meaning in *Tintin* is a fitting tribute to Herge's talent, imagination, and integrity. Having already survived for more than a half-century, Herge's fame seems more secure than ever.

Beyond Tintin

No other European cartoonist has ever exerted as lasting and deep an influence as Hergé. He has been able to gather around him a whole generation of disciples, who came to form what has been called the "Hergé school." These have included not only those artists who, at one time or other, have worked in Herge's studio, but also aspiring cartoonists eager to learn from the master's example, counsel, and assistance, of which Herge has always been generous. Many of these disciples have, in turn, been able to make names for themselves and have thus further propagated the Herge style.

In the top rank of Belgian (and European) cartooning we find E.P. Jacobs, who was Hergé's ablest assistant in the early forties as well as a noted cartoonist in his own right (*The U-Ray*). Jacobs's masterpiece is *Blake and Mortimer*, which he created in 1946. In it Captain Francis Blake (of British Intelligence) and Professor Philip Mortimer join forces in a series of powerful adventures, where mystery, suspense, and even archaeology are cleverly woven into the overall scheme of things.

In his strips Jacobs has dealt with some of the most important themes of post-World War II science fiction: survival after a nuclear holocaust (*The Diabolical Trap*), the possibility of an alien invasion (*The Enigma of Atlantis*), the horrors of mind control (*The Yellow Mark*), the dehumanization wrought by a technology mad society (*The Diabolical Trap* again), and the fateful unleashing of blind forces (*S.O.S. Meteors*). Very often the heroes' enemies are the blind emissaries of a science gone mad (like Protessor Septimus) or the willing agents of (totalitarian) darkness, best personified by the demoniacal Colonel Olrik, Jacobs's most powerful creation. Other Blake and Mortimer adventures, such as *The Secret of the Great Pyramid* or *The Three Formulas of Pr Sato*, have strong occult, even mythopoeic overtones.

Another strong member of the Herge school is Jacques Martin, who created *Alix the Fearless* (1948), a tale of epic adventure set in ancient times. A Gaul chieftain at the service of the Roman Empire, Alix is torn between conflicting loyalties, a situation that Martin has been able to put to good dramatic use. Martin's later *Lefranc* is clearly in the mold of *Blake and Mortimer* with its sinister antagonists and hidden menaces.

The work of Paul Cuvelier, while respectful of the exacting draftsmanship and meticulous detailing that are the benchmarks of Belgian cartooning, also exhibits a welcome sense of improvisation and play. Numerous examples of this can be found in *Corentin*, an adventure tale set in the seventeenth century, and in *Line*, an unusual circus story. In a more erotic vein (for a French publisher) Cuvelier is also the author of *Epoxy*, a lighthearted mythological romp among nymphs and centaurs.

All these artists have done some of their best work for the weekly magazine *Tintin* (named, of course, for Herge's hero and started in 1946). Other noteworthy contributors to the magazine include Bob de Moor, another of Herge's assistants and the author of the zany *Monsieur Barelli*; François Craenhals, who draws the medieval action strip *Chevalier Ardent*; Eddy Paape, the artist

of the science fiction strip *Luc Orient*; and Hermann, the brilliant draftsman of *Comanche* and *Bernard Prince*. Goscinny and Uderzo did *Oumpah Pah the Redskin* there before going on to *Asterix*. The *Tintin* style has been carried far and wide and has practitioners even among today's artists, as witness the work of the cartoonist who signs himself "Benoit" in *Metal Hurlant*.

The Hergé school is sometimes referred to as the "Brussels school," because *Tintin* magazine is located there. In opposition there is a "Charleroi school," so-called for *Tintin*'s chief rival, *Spirou*, which is headquartered in a suburb of Charleroi. (Actually *Spirou* began in 1938, well before *Tintin*, but came into its own only after the end of World War II.)

The style connected with the Charleroi school is looser, snappier, more whimsical than that of the Brussels school. Its chief practitioners are Jije (Joseph Gillain) and André Franquin. Both men worked on the magazine's title strip (Jijé in the forties, Franquin in the fifties and sixties) and turned *Spirou* into an international success. Jijé is best noted, however, for *Jerry Spring*, a brooding, atmospheric Western (on which Gir/Moebius worked as an assistant), while Franquin is famous for *Gaston Lagaff*, a frantically paced strip in the tradition of American slapstick. Franquin's style, definitive in line and exact to the smallest detail, is also highly effective and always enticing.

Among the many Belgian cartoonists who have gained recognition in the pages of *Spirou*, there are a few most worthy of mention in this short piece. Morris, whose humorous creation *Lucky Luke* is probably one of the most successful entries in a long line of Western parodies; Peyo, who brought out *Les Schtroumpfs* ("The Smurfs" in English), a witty strip about a people of gentle, civilized, and utterly charming elves, and Maurice Tillieux (who died not long ago), creator of *Gil Jourdan*, an entertaining detective series, and *Cesar*, a hilarious gag strip.

The Belgian comic magazines have left an indelible mark on many of their readers, as can be seen in Luc Cornillon and Yves Chaland's affectionate spoof *Captivant*, recently published by Les Humanoides Associes. Their heyday was in the fifties and sixties, and some of the best European cartoonists worked for them during that time (Hugo Pratt, Carlos Gimenez, Jesus Blasco, and Uderzo, among others). They were aimed primarily at a juvenile audience, however, and as the experimental mood of the seventies set in they were left behind. Wild flights into fantasy and psychedelic meanderings, while not actually prohibited, were not encouraged either. Some of the more adventurous Belgian cartoonists, such as Loro (*Thorkael*) and Greg (*Achille Talon*) chose to move to the more congenial atmosphere of Paris, while others, like Hermann, are now working largely for foreign publishers.

What is the future of the Belgian comic strip? Some observers believe that as the mood of the seventies fades from memory, a new generation of readers will ask for more substantial, solidly plotted comics, and the Belgian cartoonists will have their day again.

In the meantime, we still have the *Tintin* books to enjoy. To the uninitiated (if there are any) I would recommend *The Blue Lotus* and *King Ottokar's Scepter* (the most significant stories in Hergé's early manner), *The Crab with the Golden Claws* (most colorful), *The Secret of the Unicorn* (most eventful), *Destination Moon/Explorers on the Moon* (most fanciful), and *The Calculus Affair* (most suspenseful). Of the latter period I would pick *The Castafiore Emerald* for a change of pace. Finally, for certified Tintinphiles among you, the deluxe *Archives Herge* (available in French only) is absolutely indispensable; it reprints in their entirety the original black and white versions of *Land of the Soviets*, *In the Congo*, and *In America*, in addition to the deliciously primitive *Totor*. Good reading!

The Afri-Cola Warriors had built a raft for me--they'd provided it with maps of the moon and a week's supply of dog food.
Goodbye, Gollywog.
Which way is New York?
Just follow the garbage up the river.
Goodbye!
"Nothing but a cartoon character..."

To Be Continued

SALAMBO

The vultures had fled from their own universe. They had plundered worlds the way one empties one's pockets and were now searching the stars for fresh prey.

After the fall of Gail and Merennen the empire was reconstructed as a constitutional democracy. Shaah escaped and dreamed of returning with new forces at his command. Sloane had taken up wandering with other brutes again. He had still not found his blood brother and friend, Yearl, and his mind often lost its way. A blackness enveloped his soul and now more than ever he was the friend of dark things.

The new ship vibrated around him. He loved this little world of metal —its lights, smells, and familiar sounds reminded him of Sidarta. This ship was called The Silver Claw. Its structure and variable geometry made it a vessel of multiple forms, a veritable falcon of space—even its color could change according to necessity. The dowry of a princess from the Center could not have purchased such a ship—which is why he'd stolen it from Shaah's personal dock while the palace was being taken. The tyrant himself had used it—the thought of which pleased Sloane.

Now The Silver Claw was making its first long-distance voyage....

IN THE BRIDGE— THE EYE OF THE *SILVER CLAW*— HE DREAMS...

AH, MY UNIVERSE... I LOVE YOU, YOU AND YOUR DRUNKEN LIGHTS AND COLORS. YOUR VAST AND INFINITE FIELD OF STARS—WITHOUT YOU, I AM NOTHING. AND YET... AND YET...SOMETHING TROUBLES ME!

WE'RE APPROACHING A STRANGE SYSTEM —TYPE [illegible] AND ABSOLUTELY MONSTROUS!

OBSERVE, SLOANE— IT'S DIMENSIONS APPEAR TO BE WITHOUT LIMIT, AND ITS FORM SEEMS TO BE MOLDED BY AN INTELLIGENCE...

...AN INTELLIGENCE THAT IS CAPABLE OF ORDERING PLANETS, DEFYING THE GRAVITATIONAL LAWS, CREATING A FORM BEYOND MEASURE— WHAT SPLENDOR!

AESTHETIC CAPRICE—OR LINES OF FORCE?
A NEW WORLD, SLOANE! AN EMPIRE THAT IS OURS TO TAKE!

SEE THAT ONE? THE MOST BEAUTIFUL STAR, THE ONE IN THE MIDDLE? SET OUR COURSE FOR HER.

TOO BAD FOR THEM!

SENSELESS FLAMES AND VAST BOILING CLOUDS SURROUND THE *SILVER CLAW* MENACINGLY...

BLOOD OF THE HEAVENS... THIS IS HELL!

THE DOORS TO HELL!

COLORS CHANGE BEFORE SLOANE.

THE DEVIOUS BASTARD! HE IS HABITUALLY SLY!

WHY ELSE DID WE FOLLOW HIM? THEY SAY FORTUNES SLEEP WITH THE DEVIL!

Hahaha! WELL, WE HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR! WE BRING FEAR! Hahaha!

YES, THAT ONE'S THE DAMNED SON OF A WHORE!

THE GATES

GATES OF THE TITANS

IF THEY'RE ALL LIKE THAT WE'LL HAVE NO TROUBLE!

LET'S SEE WHAT THIS WORLD IS MADE OF

GO AHEAD CRAZY MACHINE! SPIT IT OUT!

YEAH! WHAT DOES THE STATUE SAY? GOOD GOOD

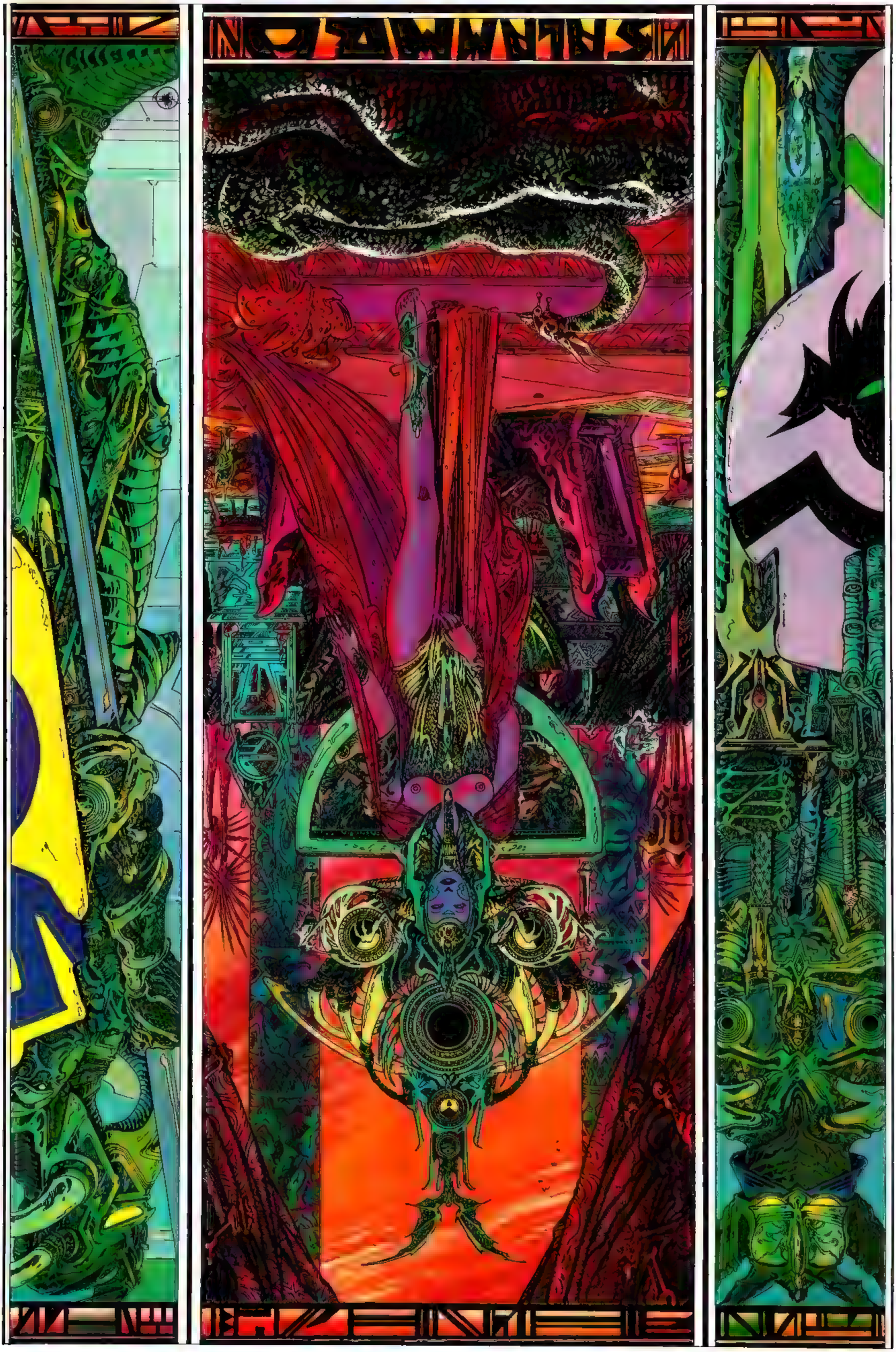
HO HO HO

One thousand years were required to build the empire of the star, and it took one thousand years to destroy it. In the final years only the mother planet at the center of the system, the remaining core of the empire, still breathed in the flood of blood. At Carthage, which had become a republic, lived Salammbo, her beauty molded by the gods and guardian of the sacred veil of Tanit. Carthage was the scarlet pearl of the empire of the star, and Salammbo the sacred virgin. Texts say that the burning sword that consumed the city and devastated the empire was brought from the sky by a man with eyes of fire and covered the world with an ocean of blood. And the divine virgin succumbed. The time had come when conquering barbarians brought down the gods from their pedestals...

...The end of the empire... ...1000 years...

...ocean of time...

Listen...listen from afar to the deafening rumbling of the marching armies, the invading hordes approaching us...nothing can hold them back any longer...O gods, hear our Lament...!


NOMANSLAND

The gate of the legless gods is passed through. The Silver Claw speeds on. Nothing will slow Sloane now! His heart is struck dead by Salamm-bo's beauty. The vulture has forgotten his prey.

WHAT?

THE SIGN. THE BEAUTY OF HER FACE. I'M GOING BY MYSELF...BY MYSELF...

WE'VE OVERCOME A THOUSAND WORLDS JUST FOR YOU TO TAKE THIS ONE ALONE? YOU MUST BE DELIRIOUS, SLOANE...!

WHO COULD STOP ME? WHO?

·TO BE CONTINUED·

THE MYSTERIES OF EROTICISM #2 - A PARTICULARLY IMPENETRABLE MYSTERY OF EROTICISM FAITHFULLY REPORTED BY ANTONIN MOEBIUS

GOOD.

MY DEAR ELVIRA WE MUST PUT IT BACK IN ITS BOX NOW!

ULP

OH, PLEASE, MADAME PAPIN! JUST TEN MINUTES MORE... IT'S SO DELICIOUS...

NO, ELVIRA, THAT'S ENOUGH! IT WOULD BE TOO UNHEALTHY FOR YOU! OH, NO! WHAT'S HAPPENING TO YOU? HOW HORRIBLE!

DEAD! THE POOR THING!

BY ACCEPTING THE BLACK PACT SHE TOOK IT TO ITS FINAL CONSEQUENCES...

I'M GETTING OUT OF HERE WHILE I CAN...!

AND LATER...

THERE'S A BEAUTIFUL MESS!

MOEBIUS

END

Changes

Matt Howarth

Whut now we got th' full story, Ah thinks it look as if Boche done whut he done un'er duress of a hor'zontal nature.

Yeah, she's a real *bitch!*

She's got Boche in her pocket and up her tubes. This all was an idiotic misunderstanding—I see it all clearly now.

CLOUD

BY THE LATE JULIAN KERNES/HOWARTH

I'm beginning to see Boche's side . . . but—*Ron!* What about my brother, Raisin?

He wun't lis'en, but yo' gon' see that fo' yo'seff. . . .

Well, what are we hangin' around for? Lez go!

NEXT: In the lair of the heavy metal kid

Here we is.

Now look, Russ, Ah kin tell yo' this—he *ain't* gon' be rational, no matter whu'fo' we says. . . . Jus' keep that in mind, eh?

Yeah, yeah. Ron?

Ron?

What the pus—

TARGET: BOCHE

What are you doin' here? How'd you get in, anyway?

Look, the situation has changed, Ron. There's more to it all than we knew before. . . .

Ya'll see. . . .

BY HOWARTH

Lookit this, it'll explain. You remember that girl with Boche?

She was . . . ahem, *seeing* the Earl, too—that's why Boche wanted him dead.

And we blurted everything in fronta her!

Don't you see? Boche didn't even really *hire* us—he was just babbling. If anybody's to blame, it's *her.* Not him, you see?

He'ah it comes. . . .

Get OUT!

Now!

Huh? Are you *crazy,* Ron? Didn't you hear what I

I said. . . .

—GET OUT, you flagellating uteruses! Wet-eyed milksops, I'm gonna get Boche—in fact I'm gonna get *everybody* before *I'm* finished, *do you hear me?* Cur! Smegma, death, kill, *die!* Shoot, shoot!

Hey

He's lost it totally, Raisin. He tried to kill us . . . huh—

Ah thinks he looked lak' a *fool* in dat get-up.

NEXT: a voice he'll heed

HERO-WORSHIP

I'll get them all! You come crawling back and I'll suck yer eyes out!

FLY ME

ROT GUT

Funny thing... they were telling the truth, actually....

Who

BY HOWARTH

YAH!

Surprised kid? That drug really burned you out. You've finally lost it.

If it matters, they were right. This Boche had provocation to do everything. (Feel small, Ronny, you've been *stupid*.)

FAIK

Small?

Oh yeah? What are you doin' here anyway? I thought *nobody* could get into Ed's base—what's—Is *Ed* turning into a swine too?

Bathroom window: *wide open*. And, well—there *is* a contract out on you, you know....

No fair, *no fair*! Yer my Goddamn childhood idol, you *can't* go against me!

Ah well, even an idol hasta eat....

No, it's not fair . . . I can't. . . .

BLAM!!

DRAW

NEXT: the state of affairs concerning the BULLDAGGER'S second "LP"

FLIX by Bhob

continued from page 5

Daughter of Dementia

Of course, you might have seen parts of *Dementia* and not known it—if you've seen *The Blob* (1958). It happened like this: *Dementia* was originally made without dialogue (the soundtrack consisting only of music mixed with sounds of sobbing and laughter). After its initial 1955 release, there was an altered, short version (with added voice-over narration) retitled *Daughter of Horror*.

Steve McQueen, in *The Blob*, goes into a movie theater with this marquee/poster: "*Daughter of Horror*—also Bela Lugosi." Inside, a shot of the screen shows the beginning of *Dementia*'s surreal cemetery scene. Later, unaware that the Blob has entered the projection booth, the audience laughs uproariously in unison with laughing faces seen on the screen—footage taken from the jazz club finale of *Dementia*. At this moment the Blob enters the auditorium by squeezing through the windows in the projection booth. Then the film breaks, leaving an empty screen, as the audience flees. According to Bruno VeSota, these snippets of footage were not used legally: "The man who owned the Coronet Theater [in Los Angeles] at the time bought the film from John Parker. I met him, and he told me the scenes from *Dementia* were pirated by the producer of *The Blob*. There was never any okay from either Parker or this man. The owner said he was going to sue. I said, 'By all means, sue, because I have one percent of the movie.'"

Because the story line of *Dementia* is convoluted and irrational, following the illogic of a dream, it's possible to watch the film over and over again (as I have done) without being bored—each projection a recurrent nightmare, a stream-of-consciousness flix flux. It was this visualization of a shifting subconscious flow that prompted a UCLA psychology professor, A.J. Kahn, to screen *Dementia* for his classes and assign term papers on the psychological elements in the story.

Briefly, it goes like this: A woman (Adrienne Barrett) awakens from a nightmare in a shabby bedroom apartment. In a trancelike state she takes a knife and walks into the city night, meets a character known only as the Rich Man (VeSota), and goes to a nightclub with him. During their drive away from the club she dreams she is visiting the graves of her parents. Here, as in some scenes from the recent *All That Jazz*, props and furniture of childhood memory are surrealistically interposed on the main set. She sees her parents' deaths reenacted in this graveyard living room: she stabs her drunken father (Ben Roseman) after he kills her mother (Lucille Howland). She awakens and enters a large but curiously deserted hotel with the Rich Man. He orders a meal; she watches in disgust as he eats. When he makes a sexual advance, she stabs him. As he falls out the window he grabs a medallion from her neck. In the street she retrieves the medallion by cutting off his hand. She leaves, followed by a detective (Roseman) who had eyed her earlier. A jazz-club manager gives her a job as a singer, to perform with Shorty Rogers & His Giants, and a costume materializes on her. When she begins to sing, the entire audience points toward a tiny window grating where the Rich Man, now alive, watches her. As the audience laughs maniacally and reaches for her, she awakens in the apartment seen in the opening sequence. She opens a drawer and sees the hand clutching the medallion. She screams. The camera moves out and away from her window, showing the city and the night, a shot prefiguring many a "Twilight Zone" climax. Possibly it is not only a dream-within-a-dream but even a dream-within-a-dream-within-a-dream.

For years little was known about the making of *Dementia*. One person who was curious enough to check into it was the actor-playwright-film historian Barry Brown. Barry appeared in more than forty TV-series episodes and made-for-TV movies, in addition to contributing to magazines (*Castle of Frankenstein*, *Films in Review*) and books (*Close-Ups*, *Who Was Who on the Screen*); he left a memorable impression with his lead roles in Peter Bogdanovich's *Daisy Miller* (1974) and Robert Benton's *Bad Company* (1972). The news of his June 25, 1978, suicide, at age twenty-seven, was staggering. For Barry not only had a face in the classic Hollywood tradition, he was a fine actor, and it was probable (we'll never know now) that the right role in a major film would have taken him all the way to the top. I keep thinking he'll win an Academy Award some day, and then I remember he's dead. Jesus, Barry.

One of Barry's diversions was tracking down and interviewing little-known B-movie performers he admired. When Cal Beck and I were putting together *Scream Queens* (Macmillan), we went well over the word count but still felt compelled to squeeze in one of Barry's interview pieces simply because a Barry Brown article usually mined rich veins of film history not found elsewhere. Cal and I also planned *Castle of Frankenstein* #26 as a special issue covering only two subjects: the first on *Star Trek* and the second half completely devoted to Barry's lengthy six-and-a-half-hour interview with Bruno VeSota taped in 1975. But *Castle of Frankenstein* folded, and our VeSota tribute issue was never published; it exists in paste-up only in Cal's basement. Bruno VeSota died (September 24, 1976) without seeing the publication of this revelatory document on low-budget Hollywood filmmaking, *fifty* manuscript pages that fully establish his position in film history. Unfortunately, Barry's interview, the main source of information for this Flix installment, *still* has not been published.

It's VeSota!

The heavyset, cigar-chomping character actor was seen in over fifty films (*The Wild One*, *Million Dollar Duck*, *Wild Rovers*), including a number of Roger Corman horror fantasies (*The Undead*, *The Wasp Woman*, *Attack of the Giant Leeches*), and he was a familiar TV face, best known for his three years as the "Bonanza" bartender Sam Tucker. His other TV credits include episodes of "McCloud," "It Takes a Thief," "Kojak," and Steven Spielberg's made-for-TV chiller movie, *Something Evil* (1970).

VeSota also directed Leonard Nimoy (in the

norhearth fair
© '79 ELMORE
I WAS TOLD THAT YOU ARE A VERY WISE MAN. MAY I ASK A QUESTION?
ENTER AND ASK.
MY QUESTION IS AN IMPORTANT ONE... WHAT TIME IS IT?
A SHORT TIME AFTER THE CREATION OF ALL THINGS.
HOW DO YOU KNOW THIS?
IF YOU CANNOT ACCEPT MY WISDOM, THEN DO NOT ASK ME ANY QUESTIONS.

1958 *Brain Eaters*), Jayne Mansfield in one of her earliest films (the 1956 *Female Jungle*), sequences of Roger Corman's *She Gods of Shark Reef* (1958), and the funny 1962 *Invasion of the Star Creatures* However, little has been published about VeSota's directing career, a situation Barry intended to rectify.

Born March 25, 1922, in Chicago, VeSota joined the Hobart, a WPA theater, studying acting when he was nineteen and debuting as a director with a *Richard III* production in the early forties. Chicago was once a center of network-television activity, and VeSota was very much a part of this, producing, directing over two thousand network/local live TV shows from 1945 to 1949. As New York City became the main base of network operations, Chicago TV production faded...so VeSota and his friend set designer Ben Roseman headed for Hollywood in 1952

Only a few weeks after their arrival they learned about *Dementia*. Roseman knew actor Don Brodie (*The Gracie Allen Murder Case*), and Brodie auditioned VeSota for a play production. After this play failed to get on the boards, Brodie became the casting director for *Dementia*, originally planned by independent producer John Parker as a ten-minute film based on a dream experienced by his secretary, Adrienne Barrett. Brodie cast VeSota as the Rich Man, telling him he would also be expected to work as part of the camera and set crew. "So," VeSota told Barry Brown, "we went to work. We did the dream sequence. J. J. Parker liked what he saw. He had promised us ten dollars and meals for the day's work. Instead, at the end of the fifteen hours of shooting, he gave us thirty bucks apiece. When he saw the rushes, he decided to make a full-length picture without dialogue. So the picture was to be expanded—that's where I come in. From there on, I started to write the scenes to expand the thing. We had a beginning and an end. Now what happens? It's a ninety-minute movie. What happens in the other eighty-five minutes? I had to piece all that together through talking to her and getting into the dream she had and making up my own phony sequences, things that would look interesting on the screen and grab people's attention.

"It was my baby. Parker wanted me to do it. Every time I handed in the script, he liked it, and we shot. Parker had good intentions and pretty good ideas about making movies. But they weren't consistent, and he didn't have enough experience (show-business wise) to carry continuity through. At the age of sixteen, I think, he'd made his own silent version of *Dracula* in 16mm, but that was it. That was because his old man had a string of movie theaters in Portland and a lot of money. He put in over sixty thousand dollars in *Dementia*."

Work progressed slowly, stretched out over a year, sometimes with only one day of shooting in an entire month, but Parker kept VeSota and Roseman on weekly salaries of seventy-five dollars, upping this to one hundred dollars on weeks they were actually filming. *Dementia* was shot in sequence, except for occasions when VeSota would have new script ideas on scenes already filmed. Although VeSota's name appears as associate producer, he received no screenplay credit. "I was interested in making a movie and getting it on the screen, and Parker had too much ego to give me credit. I wrote it *all* except for the first dream sequence, the dream that Adrienne Barrett told Parker. It consists of a girl sleeping, waking up, looking around. Something attacts her. She looks up at the dresser drawer. She walks over and pulls out the drawer. There's a severed hand The hand opens to reveal a brooch in its palm That's the only scene I didn't write."

Nor did Parker credit VeSota for his co-directing stint. "Parker's inexperience and personal problems interfered. He was the type of guy who would get into a mood. He would turn to me and say, 'Bruno, direct.' And he would walk off the set. Or he'd give me a call and say, 'Everything's ready When you show up, Bru, direct.' Roughly, I directed more than half the picture. I mean just out-and-out directing. But I would say that ninety-nine and nine-tenths was all over Parker's shoulder telling him what to do."

But VeSota had problems getting reactions from secretary/actress Barrett. "Do you remember the scene where she comes running out of the building after having stabbed me and pushing me from the penthouse? She comes running down this tremendous staircase and out into the street, and, as she crosses the alley, she stops to catch her breath. There is a twinkling of light that attracts her, and she looks off. She sees a crowd of people standing. All of a sudden, you see her whole body react spasmodically as she sees, in between these people, the hand of the Rich Man she has killed, clutching the brooch he had pulled off her. Now in order to get that jarring effect of her reacting to this hand holding that brooch, I tried several times but nothing happened. Since she wasn't an actress, she just couldn't react spontaneously. So I got her relaxed. In the meantime, I went to Ben Roseman and told him, 'Get me one of the prop guns, load it with a blank, and hand it to me,' which he did. I said, 'Adrienne, just follow what I say Run into the scene breathing hard. You've run down a long staircase and down the street. You're out of breath. When I tell you to turn, turn slowly toward me and look at me.' Which she did. At the point where she looked at me I pulled the trigger of the gun. *The shot!!* She was jarred out of her wits and almost fainted, and I got the reaction I wanted! I had to do other things, too, including tickling her feet with a feather to make her laugh."

Bruno Schmaltzes It Up

Part of *Dementia*'s appeal rests in the fact that various shock effects happen in a totally unexpected fashion (as they do in a dream), rather than being squeezed into the mold of a familiar, and usually predictable, narrative line. *Monthly Film Bulletin* critic Nigel Andrews opined that "the psychology in *Dementia* is facile," but, to VeSota, it was secondary to dramatic emphasis: "We only got it from Barrett; she didn't understand the damn thing herself. It wasn't a psychological or psychiatric approach at all.

"In the true rendition of art, when I'm doing one of my drawings, when I'm writing something that I'm creating, I'm not thinking of effect; I'm thinking of the overall thing and how I'm going to render it. In *Dementia* it wasn't this. It was strictly 'What do I do next for effect—horror effect?' That's exactly what I was doing. In other words, the way I understood it: This is a dream. You're superimposed from one scene to another, from one locale to another. The geography changes without any reason at all. Take any license you want, because it's a dream. Everything took place in a dream sequence.

"The girl is reminded, I forget how, but she's reminded of her mother. I was trying at that time to dovetail all the psychology I had learned in movies. I never studied anybody; I never had any schooling in that. But it always seems that if something goes wrong it's blamed on the father or mother, you know what I mean? So I'm taking advantage of it. I'm going to really give it the works, the schmaltz. I'm going to really show

...THEN IF TIME HAS JUST STARTED, HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?
FOR YOU...AS LONG AS YOU EXIST.
WELL I CAN CREATE TIME BY SIMPLY LIVING... HUMMM..SO BY CREATING TIME, I... I COULD. I CAN MAKE MYSELF IMMORTAL!!
DEAR CHILD, GO ENJOY THE WORLD WHILE IT IS STILL A MYSTERY... ALL THINGS EXIST IN ITS PURE AND NATURAL STATE. THE WORLD IS NOW A BUDDING FLOWER, WHO KNOWS WHEN IT WILL BLOOM, WITHER, AND DIE.

them what happens. I made the mother out to be a free and loose woman cheating on her husband. I made the husband a drunken fool who shoots his wife. The way we showed the mother — there's no apparent reason given, this is a dream — is all of a sudden Barrett finds herself in a graveyard. Coming from the end of the graveyard, through the darkness and the misty fog, is the headless character, carrying a lantern. He walks up to her and points in the direction for her to follow. She follows him. They walk up to a grave, and he points to it. The camera tilts down to a tight shot of what is written on the grave—'Mother.' Then the camera pans up. We're still in the graveyard, but now a tree in the graveyard has a mirror in it.

"The mirror is supposed to be in the bedroom on a vanity table. Mother walks in and prims in front of the mirror. Then, all of a sudden, the things in the graveyard are transformed, and there's a table right in the middle of the graveyard. The old man, the father, comes home from work, and he looks tired. He's breathing hard. His supper isn't ready. His wife is wearing this very dark, sexy outfit, and she just ignores him. He looks in an ashtray and sees a cigar (he's smoking a cigarette) and now he's madder than a hatter. He goes to a drawer, which, I believe, is in a tree or a gravestone, pulls out a gun, turns around... there's a close-up of the gun firing. There is a cut to the mother holding her stomach, blood pouring out. As she falls, the camera goes with her, and we get right down to where we started the sequence: the gravestone. On the gravestone is written 'Mother.'" The special effect of the headless man was accomplished by simply shooting against a black background after covering the actor's head with a black stocking.

At one point in *Dementia* there's a brief cameo by producer Aaron Spelling (who's currently planning an MGM pic titled *Slammer: A Brute Force*). Odd that the man who can predict what most people will watch ("Charlie's Angels," "Vega$," "Love Boat," "Starsky & Hutch," "Fantasy Island") can be seen in a film as little known as *Dementia*. "He walked through a scene as a favor to Parker," said VeSota. Also in *Dementia* is Jonathan Haze, who later starred in the Roger Corman cult classic *Little Shop of Horrors* (1960). VeSota described his initial contact with Haze at Googie's, the popular late-night hangout for James Dean, Vampira, and other actors during the fifties: 'Just outside of Googie's, near Schwab's, every night, stood a little fellow who looked very lonely. He looked at everybody that passed as though he hoped they would strike up a conversation, but nobody ever did. One night I walked up to him and asked, 'Are you an actor?' And he said, 'Oh, yes sir!' It seems he had had an experience being stage manager to Josephine Baker. His name was Jonathan Haze. I said to him, 'Hey, listen, kid, would you like to make ten bucks as an extra in a movie?' He says, 'Sure.' Jackie played one of the headless characters in the alley sequence where the girl cuts the Rich Man's hand off.'

Banned in New York City

It was the alley sequence, mild by today's standards, which upset the New York City censors. I devised a bit where she gets down on her knees, just to give it that dream quality that the whole picture has. That was my premise, to show a weird dream. So I had this bit of her crawling on her hands and knees up to the legs of the crowd and then in between the legs and to the hand. She looks up as though no one sees her, as though she's got the king's invisible cloak on. She sees those faceless figures looking down at her and their faces blend in with the darkness of the sky. She takes out her switchblade knife that she stabbed the fat man with. She can't get the brooch out of his hand, so she cuts the hand off. And *this* was the big thing, of all the things we had in the picture that were censorable, at that particular time. I'm not talking about nudity; there's no nudity at all in the film. That is the hand the New York censors censored the picture for. The picture couldn't be shown in New York.

The banning in New York was exactly what Parker wanted. When it opened at the Coronet in Los Angeles, at one showing a day, it was playing with *Freaks* [1932]. When they closed the door to a full house, they still had people lined up around the block waiting to get in. They started pounding the doors and the box-office window. They wanted in. The management had to promise them a second showing. There were enough people for two showings at an art house that never had but one showing of a double feature a night!"

Demented Music

The pure visuals minus words, a possible cost-cutting maneuver, could also have been prompted by a glance at the publicity United Artists was able to generate at the time for *The Thief* (1952), a dialogueless spy tale starring Ray Milland. In *The Thief* though, the lack of dialogue plays like a forced and strained gimmick, in *Dementia* the sounds of silence are harmonious with the dream mood. Further, there was an effort to "dress up" *Dementia* musically with solo vocalizations by Marni Nixon (who later provided the singing voices for Natalie Wood in *West Side Story* and Audrey Hepburn in *My Fair Lady*), "new concepts" jazz by Shorty Rogers (who was cutting some outstanding records during this period), a pulsing score by iconoclastic concert composer George Antheil (who scored many Paramount/Columbia films between 1935 and 1957), and music direction by Antheil's former student Ernest Gold (who won a 1960 Oscar for his *Exodus* score). Antheil was, around the time of his *Dementia* work, also busy on the final 1954 revision of his famed 1924 "time-space" construction *Ballet Mechanique*, a composition utilizing four pianos, doorbells, airplane engines/propellors, woodblocks, and other percussion instruments. Antheil's *Dementia* score has one interlude that's equally avant garde. Shorty Rogers & His Giants were filmed playing Cole Porter's 1930 "Love for Sale," but when too high a fee was requested for the use of the Porter song, Roger's band was overdubbed with Antheil music.

Released two years after it was completed, *Dementia* had some art house runs and then became a forgotten film until some scattered theatrical revivals in the early seventies (once again double-billed with *Freaks*). Audio Brandon Films withdrew *Dementia* from 16mm distribution in 1975, and, when I asked them about this, I was told, "The print is not in good condition."

Trying to find a way to end this piece, wrap it up, and get outta here, I just now phoned Audio Brandon again and was given a more logical explanation: They dropped it from their catalog simply because it was not generating a profit, since hardly anyone ever expressed interest in seeing it or booking it. So now it sits there on the shelf. To my knowledge it's never shown on television. And, come to think of it, I've only spoken to one or two people who have ever seen it.

Maybe this is how a movie becomes a "lost film."

SO IF I WISH, I CAN SAY THAT THIS DAY MARKS THE MIDDLE OF TIME?
WHO IS THERE TO SAY THAT YOU ARE EITHER RIGHT OR WRONG.
FOR WE KNOW NOT, NOR CAN WE REMEMBER, THE TIME OF CREATION, WHICH IS THE BEGINNING OF TIME... THUS WE DO NOT HAVE AN ESTABLISHED POINT TO MEASURE FROM.
IF THERE IS NO ONE TO SAY THAT I AM EITHER RIGHT OR WRONG, THEN I PROCLAIM THAT ALL THAT I SAY IS RIGHT
TRULY YOU ARE A VERY WISE MAN
THANK YOU
HELL.. I SHOULD'VE TOLD HER IT'S FOUR-THIRTY!!
END

EARLY MORNING. DAWN COMES WITH A DENSE MIST AS USUAL. THIS DAY BEGINS ALMOST LIKE ANY DAY...

MEN PREPARE TO LEAVE FOR THE ARSENAL

LET'S GO, MEN! IT'S SLOW GOING IN THIS FOG!

HAH! WE'LL BE AT WORK SOON ENOUGH!

AT THE DOCK

YOU FEELING OKAY?

SURE I DO DON'T WORRY!

FEEDING THE ANIMALS

FILTHY WEATHER...

THEY DON'T CARE - THEY'RE STILL HUNGRY BRING THOSE SLOPS!

STARTING WORK ON A BUILDING SITE

JUST OUR LUCK— ARRIVING ON A DAY LIKE THIS

YOU'RE THE ENGINEER- YOU KNOW THE TERRAIN, MY MEN AND I, WELL

PROGRESS!

PART TWO · BY CHRISTIN AND BILAL

WE DON'T COME FROM THIS NECK OF THE WOODS YOU KNOW MOST OF MY MEN ARE ARABS, AFTER ALL.

AH GO LEFT HERE

LOOK TS GETTING A LITTLE BRIGHTER

GLAD WE DIDN'T LOSE ANYONE ON THE WAY

START CLEARING AWAY HERE THIS IS WHERE WE'LL PARK THE EQUIPMENT. I'LL GO LOOK AT THE PLANS.

THE TEAM THAT WILL BE TAKING DOWN THE CHATEAU WILL START WITH THE SOUTH WING

HERE'S THE DIAGRAM EACH STONE IS NUMBERED

WHILE THAT'S GOING ON THE SECOND TEAM WILL LEVEL THE THREE HECTARES FOR THE HOTEL.

WHAT ABOUT THAT THING OVER THERE?

LATER WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT FOR THE CRANES!

OKAY LET'S GO!

THIS WAY YOU SUCKERS!

I'M GOING UP TO THE CHATEAU WITH YOU!

YEAH? WHY?

WELL THE LAST TIME THERE WAS STILL ONE MAN THERE - A HALF-CRAZY BLIND HERMIT NOT REALLY DANGEROUS BUT

- BUT, HE'S FIRING AT US!!!

IT DOESN'T MATTER I TOLD YOU HE'S RUN-

WELL FOR A BLIND MAN HE'S NOT A BAD SHOT!

CALM DOWN!

WE AIN'T STAYIN' HERE, CHIEF!

لِنَفِرّ مِن هُنَا

SHUT UP, YOU FOOLS! HE SPOTS US BY OUR VOICES...

BLAM

AAAH!

TCHAC

الهروب، الهرب

THAT GUY'S CRAZY!

THE LITTLE RATS -STILL COWARDS -WHEN I THINK- PUFF

THAT WE GAVE INDEPENDENCE TO THEIR FILTHY COUNTRY !

MAYBE SO, BUT THIS ISN'T THE TIME-!

BLAM

AAARGH!

THE REST OF YOU STAY HIDDEN! THAT'S ALL YOU'RE GOOD FOR!

WHAT ABOUT THE WOUNDED?

TAKE CARE OF THEM YOURSELVES! WE'VE GOT OTHER THINGS-!

HURRY!

IN GOD'S NAME! HOW CAN HE SHOOT WITH SUCH PRECISION? IT'S NOT NORMAL..

WELL, NORMAL OR NOT, WE'LL PUT AN END TO THIS! WE'LL HAVE TO GET THE POLICE!

HOW FAR IS IT?

ABOUT 10 KILOMETERS

WELL?

I SEE WELL, YOU KNOW THE TREHOET CHATEAU- IT'S UNLIKE ANY PLACE ELSE

INDEED

AND THEN, THIS WEATHER

BESIDES WHICH, IF THERE ARE WOUNDED MEN, WHERE ARE THEY?

OKAY! IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU WANT IT I'M CALLING YOUR HEADQUARTERS RIGHT NOW!

HEADQUARTERS? THAT'S NOT NECESSARY

FOR ME THIS BUSINESS MEANS NOTHING..

TO YOU MAYBE WHEN I WAS YOUNG THE OLD MAN TURNED ME INTO A BLACKBIRD ONE DAY BECAUSE I WAS STEALING FROM NESTS AT THE CHATEAU

STOP!

OH, COME ON! HE SCARED YOU, BUT IT HAPPENED. BELIEVE ME.

FROM HERE WE'LL GO ON FOOT.

TAKE LAKE HE SHOOTS WELL

A BLACKBIRD, HUH?

WHAT CAN WE DO, OFFICER? HE'S SUFFERING.

WE'LL TAKE CARE OF HIM LATER

SPLIT INTO GROUPS OF TWO AND SURROUND THE CHATEAU - *QUIETLY*!

JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE FROM PARIS DON'T THINK THAT GIVES YOU THE RIGHT TO MAKE FUN OF ME!

HEY!

IT'S...

OH, MY GOD!

LOOK THERE!

IT'S ANKOU! I *TOLD* YOU!

CHIEF!

IT'S THIBAULT! HE'S CAUGHT FIRE!

WHAT CRAZINESS IS *THIS*?

AAAAH! IT'S FREEZING!

THEY DON'T BURN, YOU FOOLS! YOU, CAVALE FIND EXTINGUISHERS! DON'T JUST STAND THERE!

LET'S SEE WHY THIS IS ONLY ST ELMOS FIRE!

IT'S VERY COLD...

PLAN NO 11

AAARGH!

PULL TOGETHER IN A GROUP AND USE YOUR GUNS!

OUR GUNS! ON WHAT?!

PAW PAW

PAW

IT'S LIKE WHEN I WAS YOUNG!

BRRR..

HELP!

THE TIDE IS IT COMING IN OR GOING OUT?

IT'S COMING IN!

THE FOG DOES NOT LIFT, AND UNDER ITS COVER THE HOURS PASS IN A SILENCE BARELY BROKEN BY A FEW QUICKLY MUFFLED SOUNDS.

..AT THE ARSENAL THE WORKERS END THEIR DAY

WHO'S TO SAY THEY'VE GOT AN ACCURATE SCHEDULE ? THERE'S MORE THAN A FEW DAYS OF WORK.

MAYBE SO, BUT IT SEEMS LIKE AS SOON AS ONE GOES OUT THERE'S ANOTHER FRIGATE TO BE REFITTED.

0623

AS DO THE ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL.

WE..L, JOSEPH, DID THE PAYROLL EXPLODE ?

BOOM, BOOM?

OKAY FOR YOU! THINGS AREN'T SO BAD ON PAY DAY!

..AND AT SEA.

A FULL CATCH TODAY!

..AS AT HOME..

STILL THE COWS TO MILK-THEN I'LL GO HAVE A DRINK.

THE DAY COMES TO AN END

PEA SOUP ONE SEES LESS AND LESS

IT'LL BE OVER SOON THE TIDE S FINALLY GOING OUT

OVER THERE- THE TREHOET PIER!

A GOOD DAY TODAY

YEAH IT MAKES UP A LITLE FOR YES- TERDAY

CONSERVERIES MANECH

DID YOU HEAR WHAT HAPPENED UP THERE AT THE CHATEAU? I PICKED UP TWO WOUNDED EMIGRANT WORKERS AND TOOK THEM TO THE CLINIC

AH! SO THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED! I THOUGHT I HEARD SHOTS

AND I SAID TO MY- SELF, THE HUNTING SEA- SON ISN'T OPEN YET

WELL WOULD YOU LOOK AT THAT!

HAVE YOU COME FOR A DRINK?

IS THERE A PHONE?

OVER THERE...

MAKE IT QUICK—I HAVE TO USE THAT PHONE TOO. BECAUSE YOU CAN BE SURE I'M NOT GOING TO LET IT STOP HERE...

LE FLO BAR

HEY, LOIC—WHY DON'T YOU COME IN AND WARM YOURSELF?

THANKS. I CAN USE IT

SO WHAT HAPPENED OVER THERE?

WHAT'D YOU DO, LOIC, GO UP THERE TO STEAL FROM THE NESTS AGAIN?

AT YOUR AGE, AND IN UNIFORM, TOO...!

YOU DIDN'T HURT THE OLD ONE, DID YOU?

HUH! IT WAS MORE THE OTHER WAY AROUND!

BAR

FOR GOD'S SAKE SHUT UP!

WELL...

IT'S PRETTY HARD TO BELIEVE...

TELL US ABOUT IT!

AH HA, BOOM! YOU'D BEEN DRINKING, HUH?

THERE'S NOTHING TO TELL! **NOTHING!** DO YOU HEAR?

COME ON—LET'S GO!

SOMEONE'S COMING FOR US, BUT WE'LL HAVE TO PICK UP OUR CARS ON THE WAY

OKAY, LET'S GO MEET THEM. WE CAN DEAL WITH THE REST ON THE ROAD.

SO - NOT EVEN TIME TO CLINK GLASSES !?

BAH!

GULP!

THEY ACT LIKE THEY'RE RUNNING FROM A FIRE

MMM IT'S NOT EVERY DAY THAT I PICK UP UNFINISHED DRINKS !

RUNNING FROM A FIRE ? THAT COULD BE IT

WHAT D'YA MEAN ?

OH I KNOW A FEW OF THE OLD MAN'S TRICKS - AND I HAVE AN IDEA ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED.

I'M WORRIED ABOUT HIM WE MUST GO SEE HIM...

AT THIS HOUR?

YEAH . IT'S BLACK AS AN OVEN

BAH, ANKOU RUNS NO RISK

EVEN SO

...WELL, I'M GOING!

ME TOO!

YOU KNOW, HE DOESN'T TALK MUCH.. AND NEVER IN FRENCH

YOU'LL BE A HELP

23

ANJELA!

PIW'ZO AN HIWI'ZO GANIT-TE?

HE ASKS WHO YOU ARE...

LAOSK AC'HANON FLOUR ANEZAH ...

..AND HE WANTS TO TOUCH YOU...

AN DEN-SE N'EO KETEVEL AR RE-ALL

HE SAYS THAT YOU AREN'T LIKE THE OTHERS..

..AND ALSO THAT THE CHATEAU IS A SACRED PLACE. IT'S THE VESSEL, THE HOUSE OF GOD WHICH ONCE BROUGHT THE FIRST INHABITANTS TO THE POINT HERE...

NOW HE WANTS TO SHOW YOU THE ANCESTORS. HE SAYS THAT YOU CAN SEE THINGS, AND BEING FROM THE PAST AS HE DOES ..

I'M AFRAID. HE'S NEVER SHOWN ME THIS BEFORE

WHAT IS HE SAYING NOW?

HE CALLS OUT FOR THE OLDEST TO COME OUT AND RAISE UP THE STONES WHICH THEY'D PLANTED IN THE GROUND AND...

CRAAACK

THE OLD MAN SAYS THAT IF THOSE WHO CAME TO PLUNDER THE COUNTRYSIDE COME BACK AGAIN, HE'LL MAKE THE STONE VESSEL— THE CHATEAU OF GOO-DEPART.

KENAVO BUGALE!

KENAVO...

THE FOG'S BACK...

...AND ALL IS LIKE IT WAS...

I HAD NO IDEA THE OLD MAN'S POWERS WERE SO GREAT. I-I'M REALLY AFRAID...

I'M NOT. FOR THE FIRST TIME I FEEL HOPEFUL...!

TO BE CONTINUED .

the alchemist supreme

part four

By godard and ribera

HEY, DON'T TAKE IT SO HARD, OLD MAN! I MAY NOT BE VERY OLD-ESPECIALLY COMPARED WITH YOU- BUT I LIKE THE WORLD! YOU DIDN'T DO SUCH A BAD JOB WITH IT....

IT'S NICE OF YOU TO SAY THAT, BUT IT DOESN'T MATTER- NOTHING DOES! I COMPLETELY BLEW IT!

TAP TAP TAP

SKUNK!

LET IT PASS! THESE PERFECTIONIST FOOLS ALWAYS SING THE SAME SONG!

YOU MUST UNDERSTAND.. I WOULD HAVE HAD TO GO ABOUT IT DIFFERENTLY, BACK WHEN THERE WAS STILL TIME... BUT I'D USED UP THE CORE OF MY ENERGY WITH THE INITIAL EXPLOSION! AND SINCE THEN I'VE BEEN SO TIRED, SO TIRED...

TIRED? OF COURSE YOU ARE! WHAT ELSE *COULD* YOU BE, IN THE BODY OF AN OLD, BLOTCHY, MORBIDLY HUNGRY, FAT MAN WITH HARDENED ARTERIES?

DROP IT, MUSKY!

OH, I'VE OFTEN INCARNATED MYSELF IN YOUNG BODIES, YOU KNOW- BUT THAT'S WHEN I'VE MADE MY STUPIDEST MISTAKES!

WELL, WHY NOT TRY SOMETHING ELSE? A GORRAKK FROM BORSHIRE, SAY- I'VE HEARD GOOD THINGS ABOUT THEM... OR EVEN A BOONFARK! THEY ENJOY A-OOPS!- A REMARKABLE EQUILIBRIUM...

I'M WELL AHEAD OF YOU THERE! I'VE ALREADY TRIED INCARNATION AS A WHOLE BUNCH OF THINGS, CHATTERBOX... I'VE TRIED EVERYTHING, OR NEARLY SO....

BUT *TO ENJOY*, LITTLE THING, WITH EYES, EARS, MOUTH, SEX, HANDS, NOSE, SKIN, AND ALL THE VISCERA- BELIEVE ME! MAN... HAS BEEN THE BEST!

ISN'T THAT TRUE, MY BEAUTIES?

AND HOW!

COME CLOSER, YOU BIG KITTEN!

SHEESH! WHAT A MELEE!

MUSKY! GET AWAY FROM THERE!

WHAT TH—?!?

WHY? THERE'S NO REASON! YOU TOO, LITTLE JEWEL, MAY AMUSE YOURSELF!

LET GO OF HER RIGHT NOW, YOU HORRIBLE THING!

FLAK!

COME ON, MUSKY! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE! I NEED SOME AIR...

WELL, I DON'T KNOW... THAT KINDA LOOKED LIKE FUN!

WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE! THAT RANTING FOOL AS THE ALL-POWERFUL? HE WHOSE EXISTENCE ANIMATES ALL BELIEFS, ALL RELIGIONS? IMPOSSIBLE! I DON'T BELIEVE IT! HE'S A MADMAN... AN IMPOSTER A PATHOLOGICAL LIAR!

YOU'RE FORGETTING THE PURPLE GUARD! IT ISOLATES HIM, WATCHES OVER HIM, AND CAREFULLY CREATES A VACUUM AROUND HIM. *IT KNOWS WHY!*

NO-IT CAN'T BE. I CAN'T ACCEPT IT!

HEY! CAN YOU IMAGINE THE REACTION IF THE SECRET GOT OUT? WHAT A CIRCUS!

I'D VOMIT!

BRCHEUURPS!

SPEAKING OF WHICH...

OBVIOUSLY IT WOULDN'T GO WELL WITH THE, UMM, THE OFFICIAL THEORIES....MEN ARE SO ALONE, LOST IN THE VASTNESS OF THE UNIVERSE MOST OF THEM SEEM TO NEED TO LIVE WITH THE IDEA OF A PATERNAL GOD-ONE WHO IS SEVERE, BUT JUST AND GOOD-ONE WHO LOVES THEM! THE TRUTH WOULD DESTROY EVEN THE STRUCTURES OF THE GUILD!

BOUFFOUF

FORGET THE STRUCTURES OF THE GUILD! I-I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME. I DON'T FEEL VERY WELL; ALL OF A SUDDEN.. A SLIGHT INDISPOSITION..

HELP ME BACK TO MY ROOM. THESE GALLERIES AND CORRIDORS ARE INTERMINABLE.. IT'S THIS WAY...

HUH! WHEN I THINK THAT YOU HAD THE IMPUDENCE—YOU!!—TO SEND YOUR STREET HAWKERS ALL OVER THE WORLD. YOU HAVE A LOT OF GALL!

STREET HAWKERS.? WHAT STREET HAWKERS?!?

OH, DON'T COME ON THE INNOCENT! I'M TALKING ABOUT BUDDHA, JESUS, MOHAMMED, K'ONG FOUTSEU, ZOROASTER, GARGOILLEGUS, LAO-TSEU, KRAMBURGLIERXUXUL, AND THERE ARE A LOT MORE BESIDES!

OH, THOSE—YOU MEAN THE *PROPHETS!* THAT WAS A LONG TIME AGO. SINCE THEN, I'VE GIVEN UP ON THE IDEA... I COULDN'T COUNT ON THEM. ALL THE SICK ONES. ALL THE NERVOUS ONES... LOSE IMMEDIATELY THE GAYS. UNDERSTAND NOTHING... TELL ANYTHING... DISTORT EVERYTHING..

BECAUSE WHEN I SAID "LOVE EACH OTHER" IT MEANT SOMETHING ENTIRELY DIFFERENT, FOR GOD'S SAKE!!!

AH! AT LAST! HERE WE ARE...

WHEN I THINK THAT WE'RE DRAGGING AROUND GOD— GOD, IN PERSON!—THE ONE, THE ONLY GOD THE ONE WHO REIGNS IN HEAVEN AND EVERYWHERE ELSE, THE ONE WHOSE NAME CERTAIN PEOPLE DON'T DARE WRITE OR SPEAK ALOUD! WELL, YOU'RE RIGHT, I CAN'T GET USED TO IT, EITHER.

WILL YOU STOP PLAGUING ME WITH THIS IDEA OF THE OMNIPOTENT, OMNIPRESENT, AND UNIQUE GOD, LITTLE PARROT? THAT'S SOME MAN'S IDEA, NOT MINE!

THEN YOU *AREN'T* OMNIPRESENT?

NO, OF COURSE NOT! WHY SHOULD I BE? TO WHAT PURPOSE? WHY SHOULD I PREOCCUPY MYSELF WITH EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENS TO EVERYONE? WHY SHOULD I CARE WHAT PETER THINKS ABOUT WHAT PAUL DOES? WHAT FOOLISHNESS! ANYWAY, I HAVE OTHER THINGS TO DO! SHIT!

BUT YOU REALLY ARE UNIQUE, AREN'T YOU?

AND WHY SHOULD I BE, IMBECILE? AHH, BEHIND YOU, PASS ME THAT ALKA-SELTZER...

OBVIOUSLY I'VE NEVER MET NOR NOTICED OR EVEN FELT THE PRESENCE OF ANOTHER LIKE MYSELF, TRUE ENOUGH! BUT JUST BETWEEN US, WHAT DOES THAT PROVE? THE UNIVERSE IS INFINITE!

PLIF PLOF PLAF

PSHHT.. SHHT...

BUT IN THAT CASE.. PERHAPS OTHER GODS SOMEWHERE ELSE HAVE FOUND THE *SOLUTION*?!

THERE IS NO SOLUTION, PRETTY JEWEL, NOT FOR ANYONE— ONLY PROBLEMS! PROBLEMS! *THAT'S ALL!*

SLORP

THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! YOU JUST HAVE TO LOOK FOR THEM—THESE OTHER GODS! DO YOU HEAR ME? *LOOK FOR THEM!*

WHY? TO START A UNION?

AND THEN WHAT? ..HOW? .. NO, IT'S TOO LATE...I'M TOO OLD NOW ...

CAN A GOD AGE?

LIKE EVERYONE, MY PAL—LIKE EVERYONE HE EXPLODES, RADIATES, EXPANDS, AND THEN HE'S USED UP...THEN HE DECLINES...DECLINES...

AND HE BURNS OUT

IS...IS HE *DEAD?*

NO, BUT HE'S DRUNK AS A DONKEY!

HOW COULD SUCH A PITIABLE GOD AS HE BE ABLE TO DO ANYTHING FOR YOU, AXLE?

YOU'RE RIGHT—LET'S GO! I DON'T KNOW WHY OR FOR WHOM THE GUILD HAS SET THIS UP, BUT I WANT NOTHING MORE TO DO WITH IT...OR WITH THAT GROTESQUE CLOWN!

GROTESQUE CLOWN! WHO?

YOU'RE UP ALREADY?

IT'S ALWAYS LIKE THAT— MY STOMACH'S SETTLED NOW....

COME ON, MUSKY. DROP THIS SIDESHOW JUGGLER! LET'S GET OUT OF THIS RAT HOLE!

ONE MOMENT, THERE. YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, DO YOU, YOU BIG CLOT?

WHO COULD TAKE SOMEONE LIKE YOU SERIOUSLY?

VERY WELL, YOU NEED PROOF? YOU SHALL HAVE IT! WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE?

WOULD YOU BE CAPABLE OF HELPING ME FIND A CERTAIN WOMAN?

WHAT WOMAN?

THIS ONE!

CLIC

AXLE, I LOVE YOU....

INDEED, A MOST BEAUTIFUL CREATURE! I BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND YOUR PIG-HEADEDNESS.... AND WHERE DOES SHE COME FROM?

FROM THE LAND OF MY DREAMS... I INVENTED A DEVICE TO RECORD HER....

CLIK

INGENIOUS, THAT LITTLE DEVICE— PRACTICAL AND NOT CUMBERSOME.... BUT HOW FAR DOES THAT GET YOU? THIS GIRL, AFTER ALL— PFFT! *SHE DOESN'T EXIST!*

HAH! A PSEUDO-TRUTH FROM A CARNIVAL FORTUNE-TELLER! I'VE ALREADY COME TO KNOW HER, UNDER MANY DIFFERENT SKIES! YOUR STATEMENT WAS INCOMPLETE, MY GOOD FELLOW! YOU SHOULD SAY, "SHE DOESN'T EXIST *YET*..."

YOU'RE GOD, YOU SAY? OKAY, THEN—LET'S SEE YOU *CREATE* HER!

HEH...HEM! WELL, UMM... AS TO THAT...

BACKING OUT, ARE YOU, YOU OLD RASCAL! YOU SEE? I KNEW IT...!

YOU KNOW NOTHING—*NOTHING AT ALL!* YOU DEFY ME, DO YOU? VERY WELL! IF THAT'S WHAT YOU REALLY WANT... *FOLLOW ME!*

AXLE! THIS ISN'T VERY AMUSING ANY MORE...! ALL OF A SUDDEN I'M AFRAID! I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS!— LET'S GO AWAY NOW!

NO, I WANT TO FIND OUT MORE. I WANT TO SEE HOW FAR HE'LL TAKE THIS HOAX!

HURRY UP, NOW! THE VAPORS OF DRUNKENNESS HAVE NOT YET COMPLETELY DISSIPATED, AND I'M WELL DISPOSED TOWARD YOU. TOMORROW IT WILL BE DIFFERENT, SO YOU'D BETTER TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS MOMENT AND COME ALONG!

YOU TWO! PULL DOWN THE BARRIER AND OPEN THE DOOR!

THE DOOR? WHAT DOOR...? THE *LAB* DOOR?

37/5

TO BE CONTINUED...

CHAIN MAIL

continued from page 33

off he makes that asinine statement about extrinsic events forcing the public to accept science fiction. Now I wish somebody could tell me what the fuck "the assassinations" had to do with public acceptance of science fiction. Perhaps I'm just a little too linear to grasp *that* connection.

I *am not* one of the "general public" when it comes to science fiction. I am an avid follower and feel that I am a fair judge of what is good and what is not. I subscribe to three SF-oriented magazines, the Science Fiction Book Club, and I read approximately seventy-five to one hundred paperbacks each year in my spare time. Also I *can* name more than five science fiction writers. And even though I'm positive I've read some of Mr. Malzberg's material before, I can't remember a single title, plot, or main character. His work just is not memorable and does not leave a lasting impression. That's probably why after all these years people are *still* asking him about *Stranger in a Strange Land* and not about something he has written.

Richard D. Comisky
Richmond, Tex.

Nowhere in his piece for us did Barry Malzberg "attack" Robert Heinlein. His point was that the "general public" 's awareness of science fiction is limited in large part to those authors or works that were most successful twenty years or more ago—into which category Heinlein and his enormously successful (but much-criticized) Stranger in a Strange Land *falls.—TW*

Dear Ted:

Steve Brown may be knowledgeable about SF, but his music-biz ignorance is appalling. It just so happens that Bruce Springsteen chose "Prove It All Night" as the single from his album, and *not* Columbia Records, as Brown snidely suggests.

Richard Pachter
Miramar, Fla.

"Snidely?"—TW

Dear Ed:

Thanks for including my biased criticism in the May issue. After your first issue I was pretty upset, as you could tell. Since that time I have mellowed somewhat.

I am now happy with *HM*. I very much enjoy the artwork and stories. I read everything, with the exception of *Muzick*—I hate, hate, hate acid rock! I still don't see how or why it fits into *our* magazine.

Gerald Bean
Independence, Mo.

"Acid rock"?—TW

Dear Mr. White:

I like the serious informative tone that has been recently established. The "We don't give a shit if you understand this or not" attitude never did make me enjoy *HM* more. (Of course it *was* cute, in an arty sort of way.) You need not publish a fanzine, but informative columns add to my enjoyment. I especially enjoy *SF* and *Comix* but have gotten interested in *Muzick* and *Flix*. Most likely I will buy some stuff that I've read about in those columns...and of course that is the ultimate test!

You can't please everyone, but with this "educational" (or I could have said "consciousness expanding") method you'll entertain a lot of folks...more.

Daniel Coston
Newark, Del.

Dear Ted:

The day is fast approaching when "reading *Heavy Metal* is like being stoned...almost" (as one reader put it) is no longer true. Who can get into reading book reviews, movie reviews, and other such stuff when one is stoned? You sit there and stare at a paragraph for ten minutes before you realize you're not even reading it, much less absorbing the content. I'd much rather sit staring at full-page artwork for ten minutes and really get into that.

I especially miss Druillet's very worthwhile contributions. So fire up another bowl and get *HM* back up to the top—where it once was.

T.H.C.
Decatur, Ind.

Druillet's back in this issue. Have a toke and enjoy!—TW

Dear Ted:

The ignorance of some of the recently published *Chain Mail* missives is unbelievable. I refer, of course, to the reactionary attacks on *HM*'s fine new columns. This blind backlash has come to a sickening head with the May 1980 issue, with letter writers contending that the type of material appearing in the new *HM* columns is available elsewhere, that *HM* is *strictly* science fiction, that new wave music is all trash, and that there is no place in the world for rock criticism. One writer went so far as to ask the presumably rhetorical question "What are you trying to do—kill *Heavy Metal*?"

Yes, folks, other publications carry reviews of books and movies. But *HM*'s columnists offer a unique perspective on these subjects. The quality of criticism I have seen so far in the new columns can *not* be found "in any newspaper." Indeed, I know of no newspaper that prints anything better than dry, mundane film and book reviews written to the tastes of "average" readers. As Harvey Pekar would say, "Average is dumb."

To say that you should not publish underground cartoonists such as Steve Stiles, nor criticism and historical notes about the field in which Stiles works, simply because this can be found elsewhere! This represents the height of ignorance! I know of only two stores in Colorado Springs that carry underground comix, but *Heavy Metal* is available in around a hundred stores locally. Stiles, Steffan, Trina, Metzger, and the other underground cartoonists *belong* in *HM*. The French magazine from which *Heavy Metal* is derived, namely *Metal Hurlant*, is a direct outgrowth of the underground comix scene in the US, which in turn was shaped by the very artists I have just listed. To deny them space in *HM* because they are also published in small circulation, abhorrently distributed comix would be patently unfair. And *HM* is the *only* major magazine to feature a regular column on the comix. If this type of material can indeed be found elsewhere, one must search far and wide to locate it.

I suppose that if the people who have been making all this noise in your letters column had their way, *Heavy Metal* would not be published. After all, it's available elsewhere—in French.

Artie E. Romero
Everyman Studios
Colorado Springs, Colo.

Dear Ted, etc.:

Heavy Metal is a magazine for *both* hemispheres of the brain. I like the new balance of writing and pictures. Please ignore the bitches of that segment of your readership that is illiterate and/or culturally deprived.

Jeff Koob
Talladiga, Ala.

Heavies:

Boy, does Rick Wernli have a problem. His letter in the May issue cutting up Lou Stathis's *Muzick* column and all so-called punk rock groups was the stupidest piece of shit I've ever read.

It's so-called music fans like this that really make my blood boil. They're so much against the new music coming out that they don't even bother listening to it, and then they go ahead and call it junk.

Assholes like this are making multimillionaires out of morons like Ted Nugent, Led Zeppelin, and the Stones, all of whom are playing the same junk they played when they started out.

As for Rick's criticism of the *Muzick* column itself, again his ignorance shows. Any true music fan knows that the only original and interesting music of the last five years has come from the new wave groups, and Rick's criticism of Stathis's new wave coverage is insane.

After all, who the hell wants to read about Nugent's hunting trips, Jagger's lips or Meatloaf's gut again? Not me, that's for sure.

So here's to Lou Stathis. Keep the new wave news coming, and tasteless jerks like Mr. Wernli can go to hell.

Jay Kinney's *Comix* column is my personal favorite. I've been a UG fan since I was sixteen and can really appreciate Kinney's informative and exciting history of the undergrounds. I think that magazines like *HM* owe quite a bit to the UG comix and would suggest that *Metal* fans check some of the better ones out.

And lastly, I have to compliment Maurice Horn on his unique *Comix I'nt'l* column. His intelligent article on Italian artists, and Crepax in particular, was a pure delight. I'm looking forward to articles on the artists of other countries.

Alan Nordmark
Dalton, Pa.

COMING NEXT MONTH

THE ALCHEMIST SUPREME comes to a stunning conclusion when the Supreme Alchemist creates Axle's dream-maiden—with surprising and unexpected results!

ZEITGEIST—Ernie Colon's new story captures a fragmentary moment of peace before a terrible war.

INTO THE BREACH brings together the talents of rising SF writer John Shirley and artist Leo Duranona telling the story of an average man caught up in an extraordinary quest.

SHAMAN is the latest from the pen of Paul Kirchner: a story about Indian ritual and magic, ancient wisdom, and human passions.

AND....Part Three (of four) of Bilal's PROGRESS!...Part Two of Druillet's SALAMMBO... new installments of Howarth's CHANGES, Stiles and Lupoff's PROFESSOR THINTWHISTLE and Kierkegaard's ROCK OPERA....

PLUS: The Druillet interview, Jay Kinney's COMIX, Steve Brown's SF, Lou Stathis's MUZICK, and Bhob's FLIX, all wrapped up in a visually stunning package and delivered to your favorite newsstand on August 7th!